

مكتبة الأمل



Arabs urge Syria to ease condition of Jews

WASHINGTON (R) — Moderate Arab states have urged Syria to improve the conditions of its small Jewish community as a gesture in peace talks with Israel, Middle East diplomats said. The diplomats said Egypt and Saudi Arabia were among the countries that have urged Syria to do something about the 4,000-member Jewish community. "It would force Israel to stop arguing that Syria is not serious about the peace process and boost the peace camp in Israel," said one source. So far, Syria has not responded to the suggestion. It says the question of Syrian Jews is an internal matter and they are treated equally with other Syrian citizens. The diplomatic sources said Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa had raised the idea of easing conditions of Syrian Jews with his Syrian counterpart Farouq Al Sharrar. Lower level Saudi officials had also broached the idea. The United States is also pushing the proposal as a kind of confidence-building measure that could put the tenuous peace process on a slightly firmer basis. Israeli negotiators constantly raise the issue of Syrian Jews and argue that Damascus is not serious about peace.

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Prince Hassan, Hurd discuss Mideast

LONDON (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan reviewed the Middle East peace process here with British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd. The Prince and Mr. Hurd exchanged views about the situation in the region and a number of regional and international issues. The prince and Mr. Hurd also conducted a comprehensive assessment of the Jordanian-British relations and discussed means of promoting them in various fields. Jordan's ambassador to Britain Fuad Ayoub and British officials attended the meeting. Later Mr. Ayoub described the meeting as useful and constructive, and conducted in a positive and candid atmosphere, noting that issues of common concern to the United Kingdom and Jordan were discussed. For his part, Mr. Hurd said that Britain was continuing its support for the peace process with the hope of attaining the aspired goals of just and comprehensive peace in the region.

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U.N. council threatens Iraq

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The Security Council on Wednesday threatened Iraq with "serious consequences" if it did not allow future monitoring of its potential weapons industry and cooperate fully in scrapping its weapons of mass destruction. The council in a statement also authorised Rolf Ekeus, the executive chairman of the special commission in charge of destroying the weapons, to go to Baghdad immediately to meet "the highest levels of the Iraqi government to secure the unconditional acceptance by Iraq of its obligations."

Coffee price hits 17-year low

LONDON (AP) — Coffee has reached its lowest price since 1975, figures released Wednesday by the International Coffee Organisation show. This inter-governmental agency's indicator of the world market price of coffee for Feb. 18 was \$0.5483 a pound, down from \$0.5576 for Feb. 5. "In spite of the very low level to which prices have fallen, coffee still continues to be produced and exported well in excess of demand, and there are no signs yet of a new agreement to limit exports," the Economist Intelligence Unit said in its report on commodity markets released Wednesday.

Kravchuk says Yeltsin has no rights over arms deal

KIEV (R) — Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk on Wednesday said Russian leader Boris Yeltsin had no right to negotiate strategic arms cuts on behalf of the new Commonwealth of Independent States. Mr. Kravchuk, speaking at a briefing for foreign correspondents, said the four former Soviet republics with nuclear weapons on their soil should participate equally in arms talks with the United States.

Pope leaves Rome for Africa tour

ROME (R) — Pope John Paul left Rome on Wednesday for an eight-day trip to the West African countries of Senegal, Gambia and Guinea. The Alitalia Airbus carrying the Pope, his entourage and journalists left Rome's Fiumicino airport at 12.40 p.m. (1140 GMT) for a six-hour flight to the Senegalese capital, Dakar.

Comedian Benny Hill in new heart scare

LONDON (R) — British comedian Benny Hill, whose slapstick humour has become one of the country's most popular television exports, was readmitted to hospital on Wednesday to be treated for heart trouble. The 67-year-old comic suffered a mild heart attack earlier this month and had only been discharged from hospital on Tuesday.

Egypt releases antiques of Saudi princess

CAIRO (R) — Egypt on Wednesday released a tonne of antiques and jewels owned by the sister of Saudi leader King Fahd, after complaints by the Saudi embassy, customs officials said. Customs authorities at Cairo airport stopped the shipment belonging to Princess Latifa bint Abdulaziz last week citing an Egyptian law which restricts the export of antiques and valuables purchased locally.

Gorbachev says democracy could fall in 'Soviet Union'

BONN (R) — Democracy in the former Soviet Union could still fail, ex-President Mikhail Gorbachev said in a German newspaper interview released on Wednesday. Mr. Gorbachev told the Hamburg Abendblatt a process of democratisation had taken root in the country. "But I cannot say today that this process has become irreversible," he said in the interview, extracts of which were released ahead of publication on Thursday.

Thousands flee South; U.N. depllores fighting Hizbollah, Israel in fierce duel

YATER, Lebanon (R) — Hizbollah guerrillas fired salvoes of rockets into Israel on Wednesday. Israel replied with artillery shells and air strikes. Thousands of Lebanese villagers fled their homes to escape duels reminiscent of the run-up to Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon. But Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said the rocket launchers would be dismantled in a few days without an invasion. They have a lot of Katyushas but we will overcome them and disarm them," Mr. Shamir told reporters at one of the northern Israel sites hit by Hizbollah rockets. "It (the Israeli response) will not be same as it was in '82. I think in a few days we will have here full security. In a rare daylight bombard-

ment, pro-Iranian guerrillas fired more than 20 Katyusha missiles into Israel, sending schoolchildren in Galilee running to bomb shelters and putting 13 people into shock. Rockets also hit a bus station but no one was hurt. Israeli gunners and their South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia allies responded with intense shelling of more than 20 villages used as bases by Hizbollah fighters, security sources reported. They said casualties were trapped in villages near Israel's self-proclaimed security zone in south Lebanon. Ambulances could not reach them while the heavy guns thundered. Civilians fled a dozen villages facing the zone overnight and on Wednesday, fearing all-out assaults intent on avenging the killing of their leader on Sunday

in an helicopter ambush. Defying Israeli warnings of massive retaliation after three nights of artillery duels, Hizbollah sent more than 30 Katyushas slamming into Israel and the buffer zone, security sources said. General Lars Eric Wahlgren, commander of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), told Reuters in the virtually deserted village of Yater he also did not anticipate an Israeli thrust into Lebanon. "I do not expect an invasion or incursion," Gen. Wahlgren said. About 65 Katyushas hit Israel and the 15-km deep security zone overnight and early on Wednesday but the Israeli army reported no casualties inside the Jewish state. U.N. sources said guerrillas had fired 160 Katyushas into the zone and Israel in the three nights

since Hizbollah chief Sheikh Abbas Musawi was killed in an Israeli helicopter ambush. SLA and Israeli artillery blasted 30 southern villages with 1,000 shells from Sunday to Wednesday, the U.N. sources said. The number of rockets, they added, was unparalleled since 1981 when Palestinian fighters hammered Israel with hundreds of missiles from Lebanon. Israeli artillery and planes hit back before invading in 1982 to drive the PLO out of Lebanon. Security sources said two helicopters fired four rockets into the village of Jibsheet in their second raid since Israel killed Sheikh Musawi, his wife and son. The Israeli army said its warplanes had raided a Hizbollah target in Jibsheet and returned to

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Palestinian delegation arrives today en route to Washington

Combined agency dispatches PALESTINIAN peace negotiators plan to travel to Jordan on Thursday on their way to a new round of Middle East peace talks in Washington, spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi said. "We have decided to comply with the decision of our leadership, the PLO, to go to Amman tomorrow morning and to proceed to Washington to be there on the 24th to take part in the bilateral negotiations," Mrs. Ashrawi told a news conference. The delegates delayed their departure by one day in protest over Israel's detention of two members of their team's advisory committee. Mrs. Ashrawi said 70 Palesti-

nians, including 14 members of the negotiating team, were leaving for the talks after the United States, a co-sponsor of the peace process, promised to work to ensure their safety and freedom. Faisal Hussein, overall coordinator of the Palestinian delegation, was already on his way to Washington to meet U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, she said. Farouq Qaddoumi, head of the PLO's political department arrived in Amman Wednesday from Damascus for coordination with Jordanian officials on the peace talks. Mr. Qaddoumi held intensive talks in Damascus with Syrian officials Tuesday. Foreign Minister Kamal Abu

Jaber met Mr. Qaddoumi for talks on the peace process. Mr. Qaddoumi said his talks with Dr. Abu Jaber and with Syrian officials dealt with coordination and cooperation among Arab states in the peace process ahead of the next round of the bilateral talks. The Palestinian official stressed the importance of coordination at such a time when Israel is threatening the peace process by its practices. "Talks in Amman and Damascus are aimed at coordinating stands and enhancing cooperation between Arab brethren, particularly at the current stage when we feel that the peace march is

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PLO blames unnamed Mideast state for Lockerbie bomb

TRIPOLI (Agencies) — A top PLO official on Wednesday accused an unnamed Middle Eastern country of being behind the bombing of a Pan Am plane over Scotland in 1988 that killed 270 people. "A special intelligence body assigned by the PLO traced the source of the detonators used in the Lockerbie operation and those who bought them from the arms black market in Lebanon," Bassam Abu Sharif, an adviser of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, told Reuters. "The investigation concluded that another Middle Eastern country and other parties are responsible for the Lockerbie crime," he said. He declined to name them. Asked by Reuters if the country involved was an Arab nation, Mr. Abu Sharif replied, "it is a Middle Eastern country."

"Libya has nothing to do with the Lockerbie affair," he said. "I am not authorised at this stage to reveal any other information." Mr. Abu Sharif said he met Libyan officials on Tuesday night and told them the results of the probe carried out by the PLO almost two years ago to check some Western reports which accused a radical Palestinian group of being behind the bombing. The United States on Tuesday dismissed Libyan legal proceedings connected to the bombing as a travesty of justice. "We think that a Libyan investigation or a hearing is a travesty of justice, amounts to nothing more than another attempt by Libya to delay and to evade its responsibility," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said. The two men accused by Britain and the United States of planting the explosives aboard the Pan Am plane, Abdul Baset Ali Mohammad Al Megrahi and Ali Amin Khalifa Fhimah, appeared before the media at the Libyan supreme court on Tuesday. The appearance seemed designed to put to rest reports that Libya had hidden or executed them to forestall Western

attempts to have them tried abroad. The United States and Britain have demanded that the two suspects be handed over for trial. They, along with France, intend proposing a resolution to the U.N. Security Council in the next few days setting out mandatory sanctions against Libya. Egypt on Wednesday said it supports an investigation of the two Libyans but rejects any Western military reprisals against Libya. Foreign Minister Amr Moussa told reporters that Egyptian efforts to mediate the crisis will continue. President Hosni Mubarak's government announced that U.S. President Bush telephoned Mr. Mubarak on Tuesday. They discussed developments in the region, the government said. "Egypt deems it necessary that the accused be investigated on the basis that they are defendants and not convicts," Mr. Moussa said. "A suspect is innocent until proven guilty."

Algeria seeks loans; detainees number 5,000

ALGIERS (Agencies) — A member of Algeria's five-man presidency tried to reassure the relatives of detained Muslim fundamentalists, saying none of the 5,000 men in two new internment camps had been executed. "There has been no execution," said Human Rights Minister Ali Haroun, a member of the High Council of State which declared a state of emergency on Feb. 9 to stamp down fundamentalist agitation for a return to elections. Algiers has been awash with rumours that the security forces have treated the detainees brutally and even executed some. Relatives and friends of missing people have been besieging the offices of the Algerian Human Rights League for news of the detainees, league spokesman Mohammed Rezzag-Bara said on Monday. In an interview with the Alge-

rian news agency APS and Le Matin newspaper, published on Wednesday, Mr. Haroun said there were 5,000 people, all men, in the two camps at Ouragla and Reggane, deep in the Sahara hundreds of kilometres from Algiers. Reggane was the site of the first French atomic bomb test during French rule in Algeria. Mr. Haroun's figure was the most precise the authorities have yet given for the number of people held without charge in the detention camps set up under the state of emergency. Head of state Mohammed Boudiaf, who is the chairman of the High Council of State, told a news conference on Sunday the number "could" be between 5,000 and 6,000. Mr. Haroun said two other centres, at the desert towns of

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Iceland angered by Israeli 'trap'

REYKJAVIK (R) — Icelandic officials responded angrily on Wednesday to Israeli claims that an Icelandic citizen was responsible for war crimes and said the issue had marred a visit to Israel by Prime Minister David Oddsson. The allegations, contained in a letter by the Simon Wiesenthal Centre in Jerusalem, were put to Mr. Oddsson on Monday night by Israel's foreign ministry. The letter accuses 81-year-old Edvald Hinriksson, who is of Estonian origin, of the mass murder of Jews while working as a policeman during the Nazi occupation of Estonia in late 41.

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House asks government to draft law banning alcohol

Controversial resolution adopted 34-20

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament Wednesday asked the government to draft a legislation banning the manufacture, sale and consumption of alcohol in the Kingdom. The motion by 33 deputies was passed by the House by 34 votes in favour to 20 against.

The proposal, which will now be forwarded to the government, was requested by the Islamist members of Parliament and forwarded to the House by its legal committee. Chairman of the House's legal committee, Hussein Mjall, in an attempt to calm fears of opponents of the move, said: "If this proposal is to become law it will have to go through many, many more votes."

A heated discussion preceded the voting on the proposal. Of the 63 Members of Parliament who turned up for Wednesday evening's session, only 54 were present when the vote was taken, some three hours after the session began. At least nine deputies, who attended most of the session, disappeared before the votes were taken. Many traditional and secular deputies, including some Christians, were elected to fill parliament seats with the help of Islamists and are thus apparently weary of what a "no" vote on banning of alco-

hol would do to their reelection chances, said one liberal deputy after the vote. The debate between parliamentarians for and against the forwarding of the proposal was cut short by a majority vote which argued for a vote "without further discussion."

A prepared statement by leftist deputies Mohammad Faris Tarawneh (Keraki) and Faris Nabulsi (Amman) initiated a discussion on the proposal. Formulating the proposal into a law, argued the two deputies, was contrary to the Constitution and could lead to negative effects on the economy and lead to social problems similar to those faced by countries where alcohol is prohibited.

Islamist deputy Abdul Baqi Jammo (Zarqa) shot back at the two deputies by name and questioned their dedication to Islam. "A law which is Islamic in nature should not contradict any constitution," Sheikh Jammo said. "I remember the time, twenty years ago, when they wanted to make prostitution legal in this country to encourage tourism. To allow alcohol for economic reasons is not valid," he added. Sheikh Jammo also said that the rights of individuals are not important when majority interests are involved. He was supported by deputies Yousef Al Athem (Ma'an) and Sheikh Ali Faqr (Amman) who said they would push for the formulation of a law by the gov-

ernment based on the proposal. Deputy Mjall (Jerash) reiterated that a sound economic and social study would be made before the proposal was formulated into a draft law. A last attempt by opponents of the proposal was made when deputy Tarawneh asserted that "this proposal is fundamentally aimed at creating a government and state based on the Islamic Sharia."

Mr. Tarawneh, a member of the leftist and pan-Arabist Democratic Bloc, insisted that the proposal was not worth voting on since it mixed religion with state affairs. "We must separate religion from state," he said to screams from several Islamic deputies. "For those who want an Islamic state," Mr. Tarawneh said, referring to the Muslim Brotherhood and other supporters of the proposal, "go form one somewhere else."

He strongly rebuffed the personal attack that Abdul Baqi Jammo made when questioning his and deputy Nabulsi's commitment to Islam: "This is not the forum to question my religious beliefs. I will not allow it." The proposal, Mr. Mjall explained after the vote was taken, will now go to the government, which will either agree to draft a law on its basis or not. "Eventually it will come back to us and the Senate, and then there will be more voting." "A law cannot be passed except by a two-thirds majority of the 80-member House and the 40-member Senate. Chances that it will come so far are slim, for mostly economic and social reasons," he said.

Prohibition would abolish JD 25 m industry, affect foreign investments, tourism and create social problems, manufacturers say

By Serene Halasa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The debate over banning the sale and consumption of alcohol, which was conducted in yesterday's session of the Lower House of Parliament, focused mainly on the theological and legal aspects tackled by the deputies. Largely ignored in the debate, however, was the economic and social dimensions of the issue, which, according to a study released recently, could have greater impact on the Jordanian society and industry. Investments in the alcohol industry (including perfumes and medical compounds) amount to over JD 25 million, according to the study which was prepared by the manufacturers.

There are ten breweries, owned exclusively by Christians in accordance with Jordanian law, employing and training more than 700 technicians and labourers who earn over JD 1 million a year, the study says. Through production fees, services and taxes, they contribute over JD 6 million to the Treasury and earn the country more than \$6 million in hard currency through exports. "But above and beyond our investments in the industry, there is the question of the general investment climate," a manufacturer, who preferred to remain anonymous, said. "Should the government ban the sale and consumption of alcohol, the investment climate will be such that foreign investors will think twice about investing their money in a country that lacks stability in its laws."

In Sudan for example, the manufacturer said, investors' apprehension led to the paralysis of the economic life in that country, resulting in the near collapse of the Sudanese currency and the refusal to deal with it. All this culminated in the loss of capital, and

shortages in foodstuffs within Sudan, long known for its strong agricultural produce. Besides all this, says another manufacturer, the fact remains that Jordan has not faced any real alcohol problem for the country to even think of banning it. "The consumption of one individual in 1991 in Jordan was a little more than one litre of beer, and about one sixth of a litre of araq and other spirits," he said. "This is nothing if we compare it to Europe with a consumption rate of 150 litres of beer per person, and 20 litres of alcohol."

The manufacturer added that the consumption rate in Jordan is affected by the number of tourists visiting the Kingdom in a certain year. "The consumption rate in Jordan declined last year because fewer tourists came," he said, adding that a ban on liquor would also affect the JD 250 million tourism industry even more negatively.

Many foreign tourists would change their plans and go to other countries instead. Citing the example of some Arab countries where strict laws exist concerning alcohol, the manufacturer said citizens in those countries usually cross borders to neighbouring states just to drink. Should a law banning alcohol pass here Jordan will face the same threat of reverse tourism.

The manufacturer also explained that getting a liquor licence is extremely difficult and well-monitored by governmental departments. "The industry is tightly controlled by the government, and operates within strict rules that do not allow for the sale of liquor anywhere near a school or mosque."

This strict governmental control and the comparatively expensive prices of alcohol have contributed to the fact that people in this country are not addicted to alcohol, the

manufacturer said. The study cites problems faced by the United States and India during and after their respective prohibition eras. "During the 1930's at the time of prohibition in the United States, organised crime, bootlegging and moonshining emerged," the manufacturer said. "In addition to that many people became addicted to drugs, and resorted to drinking perfume, in order to substitute their need for alcohol, as is the case in teetotal centuries."

In a joint objection statement to submitting the proposal by 33 deputies to the House floor for a vote (see story above), deputies Fares Nabulsi and Mohammad Fares Tarawneh gave not only the industrial argument but stressed personal freedoms.

"(The proposal) infringes on the personal freedoms and rights of individuals especially those of the non-Muslim minorities," the statement said.

In their statement the two parliamentarians also said drafting such a law contradicts with Jordanians' personal freedoms as guaranteed in article 7 of the Constitution.

In their argument for banning alcohol, spokesman of the Muslim Brotherhood in parliament, Ibrahim Khreisat, said his decision is based on Islamic belief that bans the selling, buying and consumption of alcohol. "Cursed be alcohol, its bearer and drinker," he said.

Echoing the same sentiment, Leith Shbeilat, an independent Islamist, said that he believed the majority of people want a ban on alcohol.

Asked whether the law, if passed, would infringe on the personal freedoms of people, he said: "Adultery is not lawful and is banned because it is bad. The same thing should apply to alcohol and its consumption in public."

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Kurdish reporter shot dead

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey (AP) — A Kurdish reporter for a leftist magazine was killed by an unidentified assailant in this southeastern city, a local official said on Wednesday. Halit Gungen, 22, was found shot dead at the magazine's local office on Tuesday evening, said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity. The weekly 2000E Dogru (Towards 2000) advocates ethnic rights for Turkey's Kurds and opposes Muslim fundamentalism. A columnist for the Istanbul-based magazine who wrote critically about Islam was murdered two years ago. Police at the time said they suspected an underground group called the Islamic Kurdistan Party of responsibility. Deniz Ogut, a reporter contacted at the magazine's Ankara office, said that staff repeatedly received anonymous death threats and bomb warnings. He said requests for police protection had been refused. The magazine has a circulation of about 10,000. It has been banned and confiscated from newsstands several times, for what authorities termed "making Kurdish and communist propaganda."

Iran to mediate Azeri-Armenian dispute on Nagorno

TEHRAN (R) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati said on Wednesday he would try to mediate between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh. "The first step in mediation is fact-finding," Velayati said. "I have to go there — to Azerbaijan, Armenia and Karabakh — to see what's going on and talk to all parties." More than 1,000 people have been killed by fighting in and around the enclave since 1988. Nagorno-Karabakh is populated mainly by Christian Armenians but is administered by Muslim Azerbaijan. The conflict intensified after Armenia and Azerbaijan, both former Soviet republics, declared their independence last year. Velayati told reporters he might travel next week to Azerbaijan and would visit Nagorno-Karabakh before going on to Armenia. He said he was ready to go as soon as possible, but had asked Armenia and Azerbaijan to coordinate among themselves first. Armenian Foreign Minister Raffi Hovannisian requested Iranian mediation over Nagorno-Karabakh during a visit to Tehran earlier this month. Azeri

President Ayaz Mutalibov said on Sunday that he had accepted an Iranian mediation offer. The two sides also have accepted a Russian offer to mediate the dispute, but have not responded to similar overtures from Turkey.

Satanic Verses writer to marry again after secret courtship

LONDON (R) — British novelist Salman Rushdie is to be married after a secret courtship during his three years in hiding as a fugitive from an Islamic death sentence. Indian-born Rushdie, 44, has been in hiding under 24-hour police guard since February 1989. Iran's late spiritual leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, said Rushdie had to die for alleged blasphemy against the Prophet Muhammad in his novel "The Satanic Verses." London newspapers broke the news that twice-divorced Rushdie now planned a third marriage. But his bride-to-be went unidentified in most reports after Scotland Yard police headquarters wrote to editors on Tuesday. The police said that publishing her name would "place the lives of both parties and probably others at grave risk." Rushdie's second marriage to U.S. writer Marianne Wiggins, 42, ended last March under the strain of life in hiding and constant police protection. He was divorced from his first wife in 1987 after an 11-year marriage.

U.N. officials to go to Somalia for ceasefire talks

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — U.N. officials will travel to Somalia to help arrange a formal ceasefire after an Organisation of African Unity summit ends on Feb. 28, the United Nations announced late Tuesday. U.N. spokesman Francois Guiliani said the team would be joined by envoys of the OAU, the Arab League and the Islamic conference, all attending the OAU summit from Feb. 24-28 in Addis Ababa. On Friday, the interim government of Somalia and its archrivals from the United Somali Congress signed an agreement calling for an immediate halt to the fighting. They agreed to negotiate and sign a formal ceasefire in Mogadishu later this month or early next month, with the help of the United Nations and regional organisations.

Surrender or die — Iraq warns rebels

BAGHDAD (R) — Surrender or die.

This was Iraq's stark warning to rebels in a newspaper editorial on Wednesday.

Saying exiles had been seduced by Saddam Hussein's eldest son Uday, said rebels could be forgiven if they repented and returned to Iraq.

They would face death if they continued plotting against Saddam, it said.

"We are ready to forgive those returning to the right path but for those exceeding the proper bounds, killing will be justified," Babel warned.

"Let no one think it is possible for our revolution to retreat or bend. It was born to survive," said the article, which was aimed at opposition groups based in Syria and Saudi Arabia.

The article was the latest public sign of anger at reports that the U.S. administration, which says it wants Saddam toppled, is considering assisting rebels fighting against the Baghdad government.

A series of articles in the official media has accused U.S. President George Bush of plotting a strike against Baghdad to boost his low standing at home in an election year.

"It would be easier for George Bush to turn the world upside down than to shake the Iraqi revolution. Let no one deceive you by promises or statements," Babel told the rebels.

The editorial appeared aimed at Shiite groups which rose against Saddam at the end of the Gulf war but were crushed in a counter offensive that also suppressed a Kurdish rebellion in northern Iraq.

Chief among them is the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), a Tehran-based group led by Ayatollah Mohammad Bager Al Hakim.

Opposition groups ranging from liberals to marxists and liberals to marxists and Kurds to Shiites held a major meeting in Damascus last month to discuss a unified challenge to the Iraqi president.

The article gloated at reports that the conservative Washington administration had been unable to find a rebel leader it could back among groups allied with the Iranian government.

"Even America cannot find one figure among them (the opposition) who could be deemed worthy to address the public," Babel said.

U.N. envoy, weapons experts to visit Iraq

MANAMA, Bahrain (R) — A senior U.N. envoy and two teams of weapons experts — including the first mission to begin destroying Iraq's chemical munitions — will visit Iraq on Friday, United Nations officials in Bahrain said on Wednesday.

They said Rolf Ekeus, head of the U.N. special commission charged with scrapping Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, was scheduled to arrive in Bahrain, the field headquarters for all U.N. teams visiting Iraq, on Thursday night.

He would travel to Baghdad with a 26-member chemical destruction team and 12 ballistic weapons experts the following day, the officials said.

They gave no details on the purpose of the envoy's visit.

Thomas Pickering, U.S. ambassador to the U.N., said on Tuesday Mr. Ekeus would travel to Baghdad "as soon as possible" to demand compliance with resolutions of future U.N. monitoring of its weapons of mass destruction.

He said the Security Council was due to issue a statement on Wednesday authorising Mr. Ekeus to visit Baghdad.

Ambassador Pickering, this month's council president, said Mr. Ekeus had reported on "serious, grave, and even appalling Iraqi disdain" for the council's wishes.

Iraq has maintained that U.N. proposals to monitor many of its industries that could in future be used to manufacture weapons were illegal, intrusive and violated its sovereignty.

U.N. officials in Bahrain said the chemical destruction team would visit a damaged bunker used to store rockets filled with nerve agent Sarin at Khamsiya, 250 kilometres southeast of Baghdad.

They would assess damage within the bunker and blow up an estimated 200 rockets at a nearby storage arsenal which were still intact but unsafe to move because of damage from allied bombing raids, the official said.

Iraq has moved most of its undamaged chemical munitions to Muthana, the site designated by the U.N. special commission for the long and costly task of destroying its chemical arsenal.

Douglas Englund, operations director for the special commission, said in Bahrain last week

Iraqis would carry out most of the work under the supervision of U.N. experts.

U.N. officials gave no details on the ballistic team's mission. Most of Iraq's declared ballistic missiles and related material have been destroyed.

Christopher Holland, head of the ballistic team, told Reuters later on Wednesday he would order Iraqi authorities to begin destroying facilities which had been used to produce missiles or their components.

He declined to give details of what factories were earmarked for destruction but said he hoped the Iraqis would comply with the instructions, which are the first issued by the special commission for any of its production facilities.

"I carry strict instructions from the executive chairman on which needs to be done. These shall be conveyed to the Iraqis in no uncertain terms, leaving no scope for misunderstandings," Mr. Holland, a British national, said.

Mr. Holland said the team, which remain in Iraq for eight days, would also make surprise inspections to search for undeclared ballistic materials.

Cash-stuffed bags change hands in Turkish currency bazaar

ISTANBUL (R) — "I buy quarters, six and a half," roars Turkish currency dealer Adnan Kapikaya, thrusting through a maze of streets in Istanbul's ancient covered bazaar.

Kapikaya, 21, is soon surrounded by fellow-dealers with mobile telephones, wondering if his offer is genuine or just a ploy to boost the price of the German mark, called "quarter" in local slang.

Street minstrels playing drums and shrill pipes turn into the alley, competing with the shouts of the traders.

"I buy at seven and a half," a dealer yells.

"Done. Congratulations," says a delighted Kapikaya, selling 100,000 marks at 3,537.5 Turkish lira. A few minutes later, he manages to buy marks from someone else at 3,533.5 lira.

The deals are clinched on a word-of-honour basis between street traders who see each other everyday.

Welcome to one of the world's liveliest currency markets, where 30 million physically changes hands on a typical day in trading built on sharp wits, friendship and trust.

Kapikaya's bluffing style is quite acceptable in this milieu.

"Here you can just throw fakes to feel the mood — it has become a tradition," said another dealer, Abdullah Songul.

"It's an open outcry system," said Ugur Civelek, owner of Deniz Kambyo, tucked into a corner of the bazaar frequented by a group of traders who make the gold market.

Civelek is the only bazaar dealer using technical analysis to forecast currency trends. Others watch screens to monitor inter-bank currency prices. Some just roll with market gossip.

About 70 exchange bureaux dot the bazaar, once the city's commercial hub. The messengers who make deals and settlements have nicknames which usually reflect their previous occupations — cobbler, fisherman, Turkish bath attendant.

The unofficial market, known as Tahtakale after the district where it is located, has been legal for eight years, but some habits from its clandestine days survive.

Dollars are called greens or whole ones. Marks are quarters or bishops. Queens are for sterling, chocolate for Swiss francs, rose for Dutch guilders, Peugeot for French francs, Macaroni for Italian lira and pilgrim for Saudi riyals.

Deals are settled within hours by errand boys who weave through alleys clutching paper bags stuffed with dollars.

"The market is established on trust," Talat Alacahanli of Randiman Doviz said. "There can be no robberies here."

Some dealers take no chances and drive bullet-proof cars. Legalising the bazaar's currency market has tied it more closely into the wider Turkish financial system.

The central bank now intervenes directly in the bazaar and commercial banks turn to it at critical moments.

Until 1984, trading or even holding foreign currency was a criminal offence. Only the central bank could make transactions.

Yet the Tahtakale market flourished in those days because inflation of up to 150 per cent in the late 1970s spurred demand for hard currency among Turks seeking a safe haven for savings.

"There was more risk, but also more profit when it was illegal here," said Civelek. "One or two million marks could be traded in one go then. Now it is down to 500,000 at most."

The bazaar's first main source of foreign currency was the money sent home from Europe

by Turkish workers in the 1960s. Now it comes mostly from farm exports and tourists.

Activity surged the first half of the 1980s when 80 per cent of the business lay in selling hard currency to people who used it to back fictitious claims that they had exported goods and thus qualified for government incentives.

Dealers say profit margins have narrowed these days due to frequent central bank sales, which usually occur if currency prices go two per cent above the central bank's own rates.

No dealers report all transactions as required. They are put off by rules demanding that 20 per cent of the hard currency in each deal go through the central bank at official rates.

"We would lose money if we kept full records of our transactions," said one dealer.

For some, three are other reasons to commit nothing to paper. The bazaar is a convenient place to exchange money made in the lucrative drug transit trade through Turkey.

"There is all sorts of laundering. This is the Switzerland of Turkey," said one broker, who asked not to be named.

Kurds plan historic elections to break political deadlock

SALAHUDDIN, Iraq (AP) — In a rundown hotel ballroom in northern Iraq, dozens of Kurdish guerrillas in jumpsuits and camouflage jackets are learning about a new tool to wage their decades-long struggle — elections.

"What does a simple majority mean?" asks a middle-aged guerrilla, quizzing his colleagues as he jabs at a blackboard.

"Any candidate who gets the most votes wins," chant the rebels, seated in plastic chairs.

The class, at the headquarters of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, is being conducted in preparation for what is billed to be a critical event — the Kurds' first free elections.

Kurdish leaders have scheduled an April 3 vote among their people to elect a Kurdish "mini-parliament" and an overall leader.

The vote is seen here as a

critical event for the Kurds, who seized the world's attention last year when they fled by the hundreds of thousands to the Turkish and Iranian borders after Saddam Hussein crushed their uprising.

The 3.5 million Kurds now control a strip of northern Iraq they re-occupied with the help of a U.S.-led allied force.

But their heady experiment with self-rule has faded poorly. Their leaders are divided. Elation has turned to despair since Baghdad cut off salaries for Kurdish civil servants last fall, and imposed a blockade on food and fuel for the Kurdish area.

"Now there is a vacuum of administration, constitution and laws," said Jalal Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, a major party. "We must elect our national assembly to fill it."

Kurdish leaders say their 120-member assembly will organise

public services and merge the guerrilla forces of the eight main Kurdish parties, ending a reign of militia rule.

But most importantly, the assembly is expected to forge a strategy for dealing with Saddam.

In recent months, the ruling eight-party Kurdistan Front has frequently been paralysed, since each party had veto power.

The election is expected to give a mandate to one of the two main Kurdish leaders — Mr. Talabani and Massoud Barzani, of the Kurdistan Democratic Party.

Mr. Barzani favours resuming negotiations with Baghdad on an autonomous Kurdish region. They stalled last fall over the size of the proposed area.

He says it is unrealistic to aim for a Kurdish state, since neighbouring Turkey, Iran and Syria — all with Kurdish minorities of their own — oppose the idea.

Mr. Talabani is more optimistic

about foreign support and says negotiations should only occur under United Nations auspices.

He also believes a combined opposition force of Iraqi Shiites, Islamic groups and Kurds might succeed in toppling Saddam. But other Kurdish leaders are wary of those groups.

"Some parts of the opposition are not prepared to offer Kurds as much as Saddam Hussein," Mr. Barzani said in an interview.

Aides say Mr. Barzani's caution stems in part from the experiences of his legendary father Mustafa, whose fight collapsed in 1975 after Iran and the United States withdrew their aid to the Kurds.

Despite their differences, Mr. Barzani and Mr. Talabani agree that only continued pressure from the United Nations and the U.S.-led coalition will ultimately keep Saddam at bay.

Kurdish leaders are quietly

hoping their elections will have an impact well beyond their region.

"A democratic body in Kurdistan will inspire people in Iraq for democracy," said Mr. Talabani.

But democracy may not take hold easily in the clan-based Kurdish society itself. Mr. Barzani and Mr. Talabani each have fiercely loyal followers, including tens of thousands of guerrillas.

"Who's going to surrender his militia to the other?" asked Sami Abdul Rahman, leader of the small Kurdistan People's Democratic Party.

Kurdish parties have begun gearing up for the vote, holding political conventions, seminars and rallies.

But the harsh winter and lack of telephone communication may force a postponement to late spring or summer, party officials say.

Iraq says security threatened by ECO

BAGHDAD (R) — Baghdad said on Wednesday a new economic alliance of former Soviet republics with Iran, Turkey and Pakistan was a threat to Iraqi security.

"A new dish to besiege Iraq and spread U.S. hegemony on the region has been cooked," said Al Thawra, the ruling Baath Party newspaper, in a front page headline.

"The aim of the new project is to encircle the Arab World in harmony with the current security measures being drawn by the CIA," Al Thawra said.

Iraq, Turkey and Pakistan recently welcomed five newly-independent Muslim republics of the former Soviet Union into the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO), a group that has been moribund for most of its 27-year existence.

Iraq and Turkey dominated this week's ECO summit in Tehran, raising fears in Baghdad that Iraq is being encircled by hostile powers.

U.S. had no knowledge of Saudi — South Africa arms deal

JOHANNESBURG (R) — The United States, accused of killing an arms sale by South Africa to Saudi Arabia worth hundreds of millions of dollars, said on Wednesday it had no knowledge of the deal.

"The U.S. government is unaware that any such transaction was contemplated by either South Africa or Saudi Arabia," a U.S. embassy spokesman said.

He was asked to comment on a Johannesburg newspaper report that the United States had persuaded Saudi Arabia to cancel the purchase of up to 200 G-6 self-propelled Howitzers from Armscor, the state company that markets South African arms abroad.

The Sunday star said the action had been in line with the "new world order".

New Israelis find jobs and housing scarce

BEIT NEKOFA, ISRAELI OCCUPIED TERRITORIES (AP) — Fanny Belinki, an eye doctor from Russia, has to stretch her unemployment allowance to rent a one-room apartment in a converted farm storehouse beside a row of chicken coops.

"I would do anything; there just isn't any work," the slight, 53-year-old woman said, wringing her hands.

She and her husband immigrated a year ago to find a better life for their children. Their troubles are shared by a growing number of immigrants from the former Soviet Union as Israel struggles to absorb nearly 350,000 arrivals since 1989.

Doctors, musicians and other professionals take jobs sweeping streets or pumping gas. Newspapers report growing numbers of hungry immigrants at newly opened soup kitchens.

Officials say the lack of jobs has caused a steady decline in immigration during the last few months. A record 11 per cent of Israeli workers are unemployed and the rate among former Soviets is estimated at nearly double that, or about 40,000 people.

Just 10,000 immigrants arrived in December, compared to 35,000 in December 1990. Immigration totalled 140,000 in 1991, only two-thirds of the total anticipated.

In January, 6,200 immigrants came from the former Soviet republics, the lowest number since 5,700 arrived in February 1990.

"There is no doubt that the

main or sole reason for these low numbers is the dimensions of unemployment," said Gad Ben-Ari of the Jewish agency, which brings Jews to Israel. "The reports they hear over there are influencing decisions to emigrate."

He said at least 50,000 Jews with visas to Israel were "sitting on their suitcases," uncertain whether to come, despite food shortages and other economic hardships at home.

Israel has requested \$10 billion in U.S. loan guarantees to help absorb the newcomers, but the request is entangled in differences over Israel's policy of building Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's right-wing government says the guarantees are a humanitarian issue separate from its territorial claims.

Critics argue that the government endangers the aid by promoting ideology. They contend the settlement plans are misguided because there are virtually no jobs where the towns are built and they do not attract the immigrants.

Israel welcomes the immigrants, fulfilling its purpose as a Jewish homeland. An immigrant family of four gets a housing grant equivalent to about \$9,000, but that doesn't last long if there is no income.

To save some of the money for food, families pack into tiny hotel rooms or double up in small apartments.

Cicippio mails 2,000 thank yous

NORRISTOWN, PA. (AP) — Sending thank you notes, even 2,000 of them, is not just a matter of etiquette for Joseph Cicippio's family. It's true gratitude.

The family is mailing letters to people who showered them with cards, letters, yellow ribbons, baskets of food and even Christmas tree ornaments during Cicippio's five years as a hostage in Lebanon and after he was freed last December.

The good wishes came from children in 61 schools, and from churches, booster clubs, businesses and individuals, some of whom stayed anonymous.

"So many people have written us in support of the family," Cicippio's brother Thomas said Tuesday. "We tried to answer many of the letters, but we wanted to acknowledge all of

them."

So Joseph and Thomas Cicippio are signing 2,000 copies of a letter thanking people for the "expressions of kindness and many prayers."

"The friendships that developed and each and every letter, telephone call or thought helped us that much more," the letter says.

Thomas Cicippio's daughter Judi Sinta has been stuffing, addressing, sealing and stamping the envelopes. A local printing company donated the paper and printing, but the Cicippios are paying \$550 for postage.

Since January, Mrs. Sinta has mailed 800 letters. They go out in batches of 150.

"When I took them in to the post office, the guy didn't even bat an eyelid," she said.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77111-19

PROGRAMME TWO	
18:00	Documentary
18:30	Maggy
19:00	News in French
19:15	Cine
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	Sports
21:00	NBA Basketball
22:00	News in English
22:30	
23:00	Movie of the Week "Brother by Choice"

PRAYER TIMES

05:01	Fajr
06:20	(Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:50	Dhuhr
14:53	Asr
17:20	Maghreb
18:23	Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedish	Tel. 810740
Assembly of God Church, Tel.	627885
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel.	637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terrazzone Church Tel. 622366	

Church of the Annunciation Tel.

623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 625383	Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel.	771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel.	775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751	
Assiut International Church Tel.	627981, 685326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel.	811295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 623824 and 654932	
Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691	

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
It will be partly cloudy to cloudy and there will be a chance for scattered showers of rain in the northern and central parts of the Kingdom. In Amman, it will be partly cloudy and winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.	
Min./max. temp.	5/12
Amman	9/28
Dead Sea	3/14
Jordan Valley	7/18
Yesterday's high temperatures: Am-	

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Mohammad Mausa	741444
Dr. Joseph Insh	770560
Dr. Salman Daboudi	776751
Dr. Mohammad Sawam	732056
Firas pharmacy	661912
Ferdous pharmacy	778336
Al Asana pharmacy	637055
Natroukh pharmacy	625672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644943
Shmeisani pharmacy	637660
IBRD:	
Dr. Muzen Sharani	(—)
Al Sharaf pharmacy	(985238)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Salah Safarini	(—)

Khalifah pharmacy

985417	
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	680100
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power	636381
RJ Flight Information	06-33200

Jordan seen raising fuel prices this week

By Jane Arraf

AMMAN (R) — Jordan is preparing to announce long-delayed hikes in fuel prices this week in line with IMF demands, a leading economist said on Wednesday.

Fahed Fanek, who has close ties to Jordanian Finance officials, said he believed the government would cut subsidies on all fuels and electricity by Saturday.

"I think it will happen in a matter of days, if not hours," he told Reuters.

Financial officials, who usually refuse to discuss such matters, were not available for comment.

An 18-month International Monetary Fund adjustment programme vital to the rescheduling of Jordan's foreign debt is stalled over the fuel price rises.

The government agreed to lift subsidies on January 1 but has

several times delayed the fuel hikes, expected to be about 30 per cent, most recently because of severe snowstorms.

Jordanian sources said as recently as Tuesday the government was trying to limit the types of fuels affected and delay a rise until after the Islamic fasting month of Ramadan ends in April.

Such a delay would force another postponement of talks set for February 28 with the Paris Club of official creditors to reschedule over \$5 billion of debt.

It would also cost cash-strapped Jordan an estimated \$25 to \$30 million in extra debt payment.

Analysts said Amman has been trying to reach a compromise with the IMF to avoid raising the price of diesel fuel, which would hit Jordan's important trucking

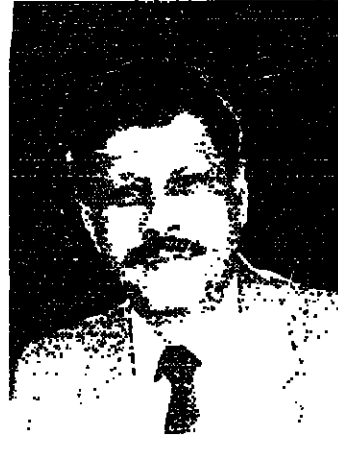
sector as it recovers from the Gulf war.

The IMF has told them it will not compromise on this," said one analyst, who added the government would agree to higher trucking rates to help offset the increased costs.

The IMF programme agreed last year aims to cut a \$7.2 billion foreign debt, reduce chronic balance of payment and budget deficits and restart an economy ravaged by the Gulf crisis.

IMF certification that Jordan is following the programme would help cut payments on Paris Club debt to about \$700 million this year from about \$1.3 billion.

Approval from the IMF Board of Directors would also give it access to about \$70 to \$80 million worth of Special Drawing Rights, economists say.



Mohammad Saqqaf

Minister encourages consumption of national products

AMMAN (Petra) — The role of the National Society for the Protection of the Consumers (NSPC) in rationalising consumption and taking measures vis-a-vis rising cost of living in Jordan was reviewed Wednesday at a meeting attended by Supply Minister Mohammad Saqqaf and society members.

Mr. Saqqaf urged society members to encourage consumption of national products and promote exports so that more job opportunities can be made available for job seekers. Issues related to food supplies were discussed and the minister said that the Ministry of Supply would reconsider prices of any commodities in light of their rates on international markets.

He said that the Ministry of Supply was keen on following up international rates of all commodities with a view to reducing the burden on Jordanian citizens.

The minister reviewed with the society preparations to cater to the needs of citizens in the coming holy month of Ramadan and also the question of agricultural products which, he said, have been adversely affected by the floods and the frost. He noted that strict control on prices will be maintained.

The minister underlined the role which housewives can play in reducing consumption and in finding alternative commodities to be used instead of the missing items on the market.

The minister had earlier met with members of the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW), warning that the local markets might be witnessing shortages of certain commodities during Ramadan as a result of the recent floods and the frost which damaged large areas of crops in the Jordan Valley. He urged housewives to reduce their consumption of fresh products and to use canned and dried vegetables instead. He also urged housewives to use frozen rather than fresh meat, noting that the Ministry of Supply was providing frozen meat in large quantities to the market.

The GFJW Wednesday announced that it was working out a plan to spread awareness among the public during the month of Ramadan as well as campaigns to fight the rising cost of living and provide protection to consumers.

The announcement was made by Federation President Dr. Hafsa Abu Ghazaleh, who said that her group was coordinating efforts with various concerned organisations like the Noor Al Hussein Foundation and the Queen Alia Social Welfare Fund.

Dr. Abu Ghazaleh said in her statement Wednesday that the federation was setting up a committee jointly with the Ministry of Health to spread awareness about health matters.

DEF facilitates easy-term loans to business-oriented unemployed

AMMAN (J.T.) — In a bid to help the government deal with the question of unemployment in Jordan, the Development and Employment Fund (DEF) Wednesday announced a series of measures connected with the granting of easy-term loans to individuals wishing to start businesses.

DEF Director General Abdul Ilah Abu Ayash said that in compliance with the government's request to simplify procedures for borrowers and with a view to helping as many projects as possible to be carried out, DEF has now raised to JD20,000 the total sum of money which can be lent to an individual borrower for his business.

The applicant should provide 10 to 25 per cent of the overall cost of the project scheme and will have to pay 6.5 per cent

interest on the loan, which must be back in seven years.

He said that the borrower would be granted a two-year grace period before starting to pay the dues, either in monthly instalments or once every four months.

To facilitate matters further, DEF will be demanding a guarantee, which could be a mortgage of a real estate owned by the borrower, the borrower's pension or the salary of a guarantor, or a merchant's guarantee statement, to enable an individual to get the loan from DEF, he said.

In its statement, the DEF said that these measures were taken in compliance with Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker's directives to various government ministries and departments to launch a comprehensive campaign to deal with the chronic

problem of unemployment in Jordan.

In his directives, circulated Monday, the prime minister presented a seven-point plan to deal with unemployment, stressing that the DEF should have the leading role in dealing with this problem through a set of effective measures "beyond its traditional framework."

The DEF is not a regular banking institution, it is rather an institution that promotes socio-economic development in Jordan, said the prime minister.

The DEF, he added, should simplify procedures to make its services available to all those who deserve assistance, especially in the rural regions where income-generating projects should be started.

The prime minister said that the DEF should direct its atten-

tion to serving low-income groups in the Jordanian communities.

In its statement, Wednesday, the DEF said that priority would be given to low-income people, provided that beneficiaries dedicate all their time to their projects.

Borrowers from the DEF should not be among those employed in the private or public sectors, should have acquired a skill in a specific trade and must have ample experience and ability for the type of work they require, they must not be beneficiaries of any other projects.

According to Dr. Abu Ayash, the DEF will give priority in loans to agricultural engineers, tradesmen, graduates of universities or other educational institutions and vocational training centres and to unemployed citizens.

UNRWA head to visit Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Commissioner General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), Iler Turkmen, is due here Thursday for a two-day visit to Jordan. During the visit Mr. Turkmen will hold talks with UNRWA officials in Jordan and tour a number of Palestinian refugee camps in the Kingdom.

Mr. Turkmen will also hold a press conference in Amman, Thursday evening, to outline the agency's various services to the Palestinians in UNRWA's fields of operations in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

In a statement to UNRWA Newsletter "Palestine Refugees Today," Mr. Turkmen recently outlined the agency's role, noting that UNRWA's staff of about 19,000 deals with 2.5 million registered refugees under constantly changing circumstances.

UNRWA offers health education and social services to the Palestinian refugees through contributions made by donor countries and world organisations.

Mr. Turkmen welcomed the European Community's recent pledge of about \$16.7 million for the planned \$35 million-worth 232-bed hospital in the southern part of the Gaza Strip and said he hoped for more donations to come in for the agency's 1992 operations.

UNRWA last month released its 1992 regular budget, which totals \$572 million, noting that most of the allocations will go to education services.

Mr. Turkmen was reported last month to be appealing to the international community for an extra \$4 million in aid this year to provide for Palestine refugees living in Jordan.

The extra fund is needed to cover the cost of expatriate children's education in UNRWA schools.

According to the UNRWA report, most of the returning Palestinian children from the Gulf ended up in Jordan and UNRWA admitted 7,000 children in its own schools during 1991.

NAF launches study of returnees' needs

AMMAN (J.T.) — The National Aid Fund (NAF) has embarked on a study designed to define the needs of expatriates returning to the Kingdom in the wake of the Gulf crisis prior to offering them assistance and rehabilitation services, according to Minister of Social Development Dr. Amin Mashagbeh.

The expatriates are to be helped to initiate income-generating projects to support their families and to help them become settled in the local community, said the minister, who is also chairman of the NAF board.

The minister said that the government has lately shifted the responsibility of the returning expatriates from the Ministry of Social Development, noting that the ministry plans to offer immediate help to needy expatriates after carefully studying their cases and the extent of damage to their interests resulting from the Gulf war.

Dr. Mashagbeh said that nearly 55 per cent of the expatriates have expressed the desire to establish their own income-generating projects. He said he hoped that these groups will be able to do so and earn a living for themselves and their families and help the government deal with the unemployment issue in Jordan.

He also said that the problem of educating expatriate children was solved by admitting 42,000 of them in schools.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Yemeni official concludes visit

AMMAN (Petra) — Yemeni Labour and Vocational Training Minister Abdul Rahman Salem Thilban and the accompanying delegation left Amman Wednesday ending a three-day visit to Jordan. The Yemeni minister held talks with Jordanian officials on scopes of cooperation between Jordan and Yemen in labour-related fields. Mr. Thilban was seen off at the airport by the Director of the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC), several officials at the Ministry of Labour and the Yemeni ambassador to Jordan.

Committee passes loan law

AMMAN (Petra) — The Upper House of Parliament's Financial Committee met Wednesday under the chairmanship of House Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi and approved a draft law on a loan agreement between Jordan and France as it was referred to by the Lower House of Parliament. The committee also approved a Foreign Investments Draft Law after amending parts of it.

Pollution seminar to be held

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordanian Society for the Control of Environmental Pollution, in cooperation with the Goethe-Institute in Amman, Saturday will organise a seminar on environmental and air pollution. The three-day seminar will discuss several research papers on air pollution and its effects on the environment.

New stamps to be unveiled

AMMAN (Petra) — The Post Office and Postal Savings Corporation will today issue its first 1992 stamps under the title "Jordan's participation in Seville 1992 Expo." The stamps, which will be of 80 and 320 fils denominations, can be found in post offices around the Kingdom and from the corporations Stamps Department.

103 industries registered with chamber

AMMAN (Petra) — A total of 103 new industries with a capital of JD 12,266,000 were registered at the Amman Chamber of Industry during the year ending on Dec. 31, 1991. In 1990, some 160 industries with a capital of JD 10.6 million were registered. The new industries covered 14 industrial sectors, with engineering industries ranking first followed by supply industries in the second place and plastic and chemical industries in the third and fourth places, respectively. In another development, the Industrial Development Bank (IDB) approved the granting of JD 2,245,000 to finance new projects in the industrial, touristic and medical fields.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of oil and water colour paintings by Tete Wegelius, Lucy Marto, Huda Bitar and Jennifer Bowker at Alia Art Gallery.
- ★ Art exhibition by Spanish artist Sana Eshari at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Shaker Hassan Al Said at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery (10 a.m.-8 p.m.)
- ★ Exhibition of photographs on Goethe-Forest, between Tufleik and Shobak, at the Jordan University for Women.
- ★ Exhibition entitled "The Uprising in Cartoons" at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Graphic art exhibition by Sadik Kwaish at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens Street.

THEATRE

- ★ Arabic play entitled "Who's There?" at the Royal Cultural Centre — 8 p.m.

FILM

- ★ Italian film entitled "Mami sulla città," shown as part of Italian Film Week, at the Royal Cultural Centre — 7:30 p.m.

BARAKAT SHOWROOM for

Hand Made Knitting and Embroidery

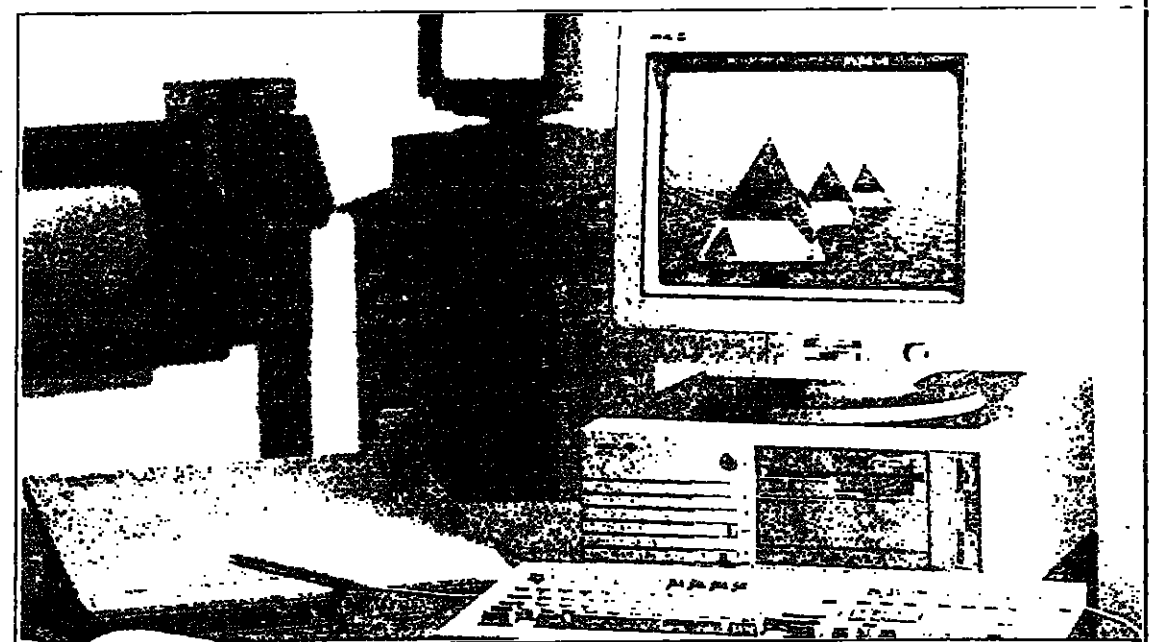
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- 6) Various collection of catalogues: embroidery, knitting, crochet,
- 7) Embroidery thread — France
- 8) Canvas and carpet kits — Germany
- 9) Dyes for all kinds of textile fabrics.
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Lisbon spirit bares Israel

THE EUROPEAN ministerial meeting, which ended in Lisbon Feb. 17, adopted resolutions that could lend considerable support to the fledgling peace process in the Middle East. After registering their concern and deep interest in peace in our region due to its geographic proximity to Europe and the "long-standing political, historical, cultural, economic and commercial ties" that bind the two neighbouring areas of the world, the statement emerging from the Lisbon forum reaffirmed the equally long-held conviction that the stability and security of the two regions are intertwined and organically linked. For these reasons, the European Community served notice that Europe will play a "constructive and active" role in the Middle East peace process in its two complementary tracks.

Having said that, the European ministers went beyond the customary rhetoric and pious wishes. Their resolutions spelled out in concrete terms how and what should be done by the immediate parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, the co-sponsors of the bilateral and multilateral peace talks and last but not least the European Community itself.

We now understand those resolutions to mean that Europe is saying in no uncertain terms the participation of all the parties directly involved is sine qua non for the resumption of the multilateral negotiations. That is another way of saying that without Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinians, there can be no fruitful talks, which is totally true.

Then the community ministers went on to build up on this first observation by specifically calling for a broader Palestinian participation at the negotiations. In this vein, the European officials stated that "a formula allowing for a broader Palestinian participation should be sought." As for the role of the United Nations and its specialised agencies to which Israel objects vehemently for fear that the peace talks turn truly international, the Lisbon meeting came out solidly in favour of a more forthright U.N. presence. "The United Nations and their specialised agencies should participate and contribute to the building up of regional cooperation," was the unanimous view of the ministers. As for the European Community itself, the Lisbon communiqué came out strongly in favour of its full participation, "preferably as co-organisers in all working groups established for the multilateral negotiations."

Against this backdrop of positive and objective resolutions, one has to take a look at what the Israeli government has been doing in order to see just what is impeding progress on the peace front. A few days ago, Israeli helicopter gunships gunned down Abbas Musawi, the spiritual leader of Hizbollah in Lebanon, and his family in a naked bid to embarrass the Arab side and prevent it from going to Washington. Then, on the eve of the departure of the Palestinian delegation to the U.S. capital to join the peace talks, two members of their team were detained. Again the purpose was to humiliate the Arab parties and make their involvement in the peace negotiations that much more difficult. When three Israeli soldiers were killed a few days ago, Israeli leaders were quick to precipitously accuse the PLO of being directly responsible.

As the European statement in Lisbon concluded, that violence by all sides should be avoided in order to "create a climate of confidence." It must be noted that violence perpetrated by individuals suffering from prolonged occupation and suppression cannot be put on the same plane with state actions and state terrorism.

Israeli war-mongering aside, the sum of ideas adopted by the European ministers should be regarded seriously by all parties which have a stake in seeing a peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict leading to regional stability and cooperation, not least of all by Europe itself. The timing of this statement and its support by concrete actions by all sides has never been more pressing.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily commented on the arrest of two members of the Palestinian delegation to the bilateral talks in Washington, noting that the action was tantamount to an insult directed at Washington which is sponsoring the peace talks. The arrest of the two Palestinians is regarded by the Palestinian people as a continuation of Israel's ongoing atrocities and terrorist actions against the oppressed people of Palestine, but the world regards this action as yet another Israeli attempt to abort the negotiations and the whole peace process, said the paper. It said that Israel was taking such illegal measure in defiance of Washington, which has given all facilities and made preparations for the talks, and it asked what would the situation be should the talks shift to the Middle East or to the occupied territories for that matter? It said no just peace can be achieved through force and through intimidation, but rather through dialogue and compliance with the international legitimacy. Israel's aim is clearly to see the United States disappointed and rebuffed in its effort to convene the conference and implement U.N. resolutions and to drive despair into the hearts of the Palestinian people and the other Arab parties to the negotiations.

WHILE DECLARING and repeating that it is determined to achieve peace in the Middle East region, the U.S. administration is keeping a closed eye over Israel's continued aggression on South Lebanon where it is killing innocent people at will, said Sawi Al Shabab daily Wednesday. The paper asked how Washington can achieve peace while watching American-made Israeli war planes raiding the homes of the Palestinian and Lebanese people. Without exercising political, economic and other forms of pressure on Israel, the paper said, Washington can achieve no peace, and by allowing Israel to build more settlements on occupied lands, it will never solve the Palestinian problem as it had been claiming, the paper added. Instead of taking moves to end Israel's aggression against the Palestinians and the Lebanese, Washington is keeping silent and quietly helping the Jewish state to pursue its settlement programme, the paper added.

Killing of archaeologist in occupied territories raises troubling questions

By David W. McCreery

On Sunday, Jan. 19, 1992, a prominent U.S. archaeologist, Dr. Albert Glock, was shot to death in the Israeli occupied territories. For the past 16 years, Mr. Glock had taught at Bir Zeit University and was well-known and respected in the international academic community.

News of Mr. Glock's death was announced through an Associated Press story in the U.S. press on Jan. 20, but no further news of the incident has appeared since then. Because he was a friend, I have sought during the past two weeks to gather as much information on this case as possible. My

inquiries from the U.S. press and various governmental officials have provided no new information, but from other sources, which appear to be reliable and which no one has challenged, I have learned the following:

Mr. Glock was killed at approximately 3 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 19, on the doorstep of a Palestinian friend. According to eye-witnesses, after shooting Mr. Glock twice at close range, the masked assailant walked through the front gate of the property, was met on the street by two accomplices, and drove away in a white car with yellow (Israeli) license plates.

The response to phone calls for assistance came when an ambulance arrived at the scene two hours after the shooting and the Israeli police arrived three hours later. As of Feb. 1, there are no reports of individuals or groups claiming responsibility for the murder, and no arrests have been announced.

There are conflicting reports as to whether the police investigation was closed after two days or is continuing. The working hypothesis of the police appears to be that Mr. Glock was killed by a Palestinian as a result of opposition to foreigners, especially Americans, serving on the faculty of Bir Zeit University. Another suggestion is that he was killed by someone who suspected him of being a CIA agent. There

is speculation that Hamas or some other Arab group carried out the killing to disrupt the peace process or to protest the first anniversary of the Gulf war.

Many Palestinians in the West Bank have concluded that Mr. Glock was the victim of a professional "hit", orchestrated by the Israeli intelligence service. Given the evidence, which of these options seems most likely?

Any one of the above mentioned scenarios is possible, but they are not all equally plausible. If Mr. Glock was killed by Palestinians for being a suspected CIA agent or because of his teaching position at Bir Zeit, wouldn't at least one group claim responsibility for the murder?

Why did the police take so long to respond, and what accounts for the lack of progress in the investigation?

Normally in a case like this, Israeli security forces are on the scene in a matter of minutes, roads are sealed off, and numerous people are detained for questioning, if there is a remote possibility that they were involved in the incident or saw anything. None of these steps was taken.

There seem to be no obvious motives in this case, or are there? The one clear message that emerges is that any foreigners who decide to become involved in a Palestinian institution of higher education are subjecting themselves to very real dangers. Is the

source of this threat the Palestinian community or the Israeli authorities?

I cannot help but wonder why this case is not being more rigorously investigated by the Israeli and U.S. governments as well as the press.

David W. McCreery of Salem is an associate professor in the Religion Department at Wilamette University. From 1961 to 1988 he served as the director and professor of history and archaeology at the American Centre of Oriental Research in Amman, Jordan. The above article is reprinted from the Feb. 6, 1992, issue of the Statement Journal of Salem, Oregon.

Edward Kennedy at 60 — still struggling with image

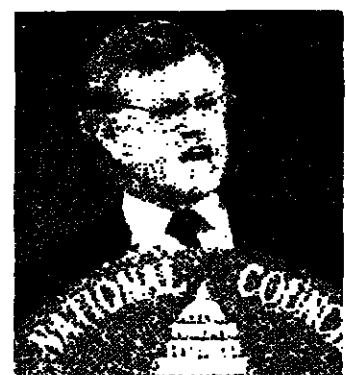
By Robert Green Reuter

WASHINGTON — Can it be that the Soviet Union is dust? That Elvis and Marilyn and Bogie are long gone? That Teddy Kennedy is 60?

Edward Moore Kennedy, who came to Washington as the baby brother of the president and the attorney general and saw them both into their graves, enters the silver decade this Saturday (February 22) in one of those melancholy milestones that remind millions of people of a certain age how time has flown.

And yet, for Mr. Kennedy, things somehow remain the same: He is still struggling to get out from under a cloud of personal crisis even at 60, as the dead of U.S. Senate liberals with a leonine head of gray-streaked hair.

Some find that unfair. Mr. Kennedy, a Massachusetts Democrat, has spent almost half his life as a U.S. senator and compiled a long list of legislative achievements on major issues such as health care, education, civil rights and foreign policy. The youngest senator ever at



SENATOR POWER

Edward Kennedy

30 when he was elected to fill then-President John Kennedy's vacant seat in 1962, he now ranks fifth among the 100 senators in seniority, chairs a major legislative committee and ranks high on two others.

"He has long been a major force in the Senate," political scientist Thomas Mann of the private Brookings Institution told Reuters. "He is hard-working and effective. Odds are that that will continue."

But to most Americans and others, Mr. Kennedy gained the limelight because of his assassinated brothers, John and Robert. He became notorious for the 1969 accident in Chappaquiddick, Massachusetts, when a young woman passenger in a car he was driving drowned after a night of partying, and he periodically reclaimed national attention thanks to some scandal, family tragedy or failed presidential bid.

Now he is shaking off the effects of the sex trial of nephew William Kennedy Smith, who was acquitted last December of charges he raped a woman he picked up at a Palm Beach, Florida, bar while out drinking with his uncle Ted.

"I recognise my own shortcomings — the faults in the conduct of my private life," Mr. Kennedy said in a mea culpa speech he made for the benefit of political supporters last autumn. "I recognise that I alone am responsible

for them and I am the one who must confront them."

"Unlike my brothers, I have been given length of years and time. And as I approach my 60th birthday, I am determined to give all that I have to advance the causes for which I have stood for almost a third of a century," he said.

This year he has pushed bills through the Labour and Human Resources Committee he chairs to reform health care insurance and lift President George Bush's ban on foetal tissue research.

But a Washington Magazine poll of senior House and Senate aides from both parties recently named Mr. Kennedy as one of 20 senators they would most like to see leave Congress.

The rape trial forced Mr. Kennedy to keep a low profile for most of last year.

Mr. Smith's attorney made the senator a key figure in the trial, asking prospective jurors what they thought of him and the rest of America's most famous political family. Most said Edward was the Kennedy they liked the least.

Mr. Smith was acquitted after a sensational televised trial, including Mr. Kennedy's testimony that

he had asked his son Patrick and Mr. Smith to go out drinking because he was restless.

"I wish I had gone for a long walk on the beach instead," Mr. Kennedy said.

Subsequently, in what may have been an effort to overcome his reputation as a heavy drinker and womaniser, Mr. Kennedy went to his office Christmas party last year in a business suit rather than in costume as he usually does. He once showed up as Batman.

Congressman Joe Moakley, a fellow Massachusetts Democrat, said Mr. Kennedy's strong appearance at the rape trial should keep that from being much of an issue in his next election in 1994.

"He hit the ball out of the park," Mr. Moakley said, describing the testimony in baseball terms. "He's still very popular."

Mr. Kennedy has been re-elected five times to six-year Senate terms since winning his brother's seat in a special ballot.

But there seems little chance he will run for president again as he did unsuccessfully in 1980 against Democrat Jimmy Carter. He withdrew from consideration for the 1984 and 1988 nominations, citing family strains, and his name never came up in this year's race among little-known Democrats.

Until now, Mr. Kennedy had been mentioned as a leading possible contender in every presidential election year since 1968.

Terrorism takes back seat to diplomacy — for now

By Walter Putnam The Associated Press

NICOSIA, CYPRUS —

International terrorism has taken a back seat to diplomacy in the Middle East in recent months, but experts say there is still plenty of potential for violence.

"We cannot rule out a confrontation escalating to full-scale war if the peace process gets bogged down, derailed or abandoned," said Paul Wilkinson, director of London's privately funded institute on conflicts and terrorism.

"The cost we should be prepared to pay for any diplomatic and political settlement is that the extremists will try to derail it," he stressed.

Radical Palestinians hijacked airliners to advance their cause in the Arab-Israeli conflict during

the 1970s and 1980s. Hostage-taking and suicide bombings in Lebanon embodied the bitter hatred of Muslim extremists towards the West.

But there has been a decline in terrorist acts as Arab moderates moved more towards compromise and negotiation, and as international anti-terrorism cooperation increased dramatically.

But that could change. Shiite leaders have vowed they would take revenge for an Israeli air strike in South Lebanon on Sunday that killed Sheikh Abbas Musawi, leader of the Shiite Muslim Hizbollah, or Party of God.

Syria and Iran, both now moving closer to the West, cooperated in securing the release of hostages in Lebanon, although both retain links to terrorist groups and remain on a U.S. State Department list as sponsors

of terrorism.

Libya, implicated by U.S., British and French authorities in the mid-air bombing of two Western airliners in which more than 400 people were slain, is now under close international scrutiny and seems unlikely to stage further provocations.

But there are still terrorist groups waiting in the wings.

"The ready state sponsorship that these groups had, the asylum and freedom to operate, the support they got in Eastern Europe, are all gone. There's no question that it's a lot tougher for them," said counter-terrorism specialist Brian Jenkins of Kroll Associates, an international security consulting firm.

"But there does remain a core fringe, which retains the capability. It has the people, the net-

works, the places to operate."

An added threat is the potential for newer, more lethal weapons.

"Some of the state sponsors of terrorism, Iraq and Libya for example, have control over chemical or biological weapons and might allow their clients to utilise them," Mr. Wilkinson said.

Even though Iran's current pragmatic leaders seek rapprochement with the West, the internal debate continues on just how militant Iran should be in spreading its Islamic revolution.

Tehran also has been linked to assassinations of political opponents abroad, including Shapour Bakhtiar, the shah's last prime minister, in August in France. Also, the death decree against author Salman Rushdie remains in effect.

LETTERS

Thank you

To the Editor:

On behalf of the British Institute at Amman for Archaeology and History, we would like to congratulate all the authorities who helped keep Jordan and, in particular, Amman working during the recent bad weather.

We were most impressed by their efficiency and goodwill. Despite appalling conditions there were very few breakdowns in services and they were temporary; the roads were rarely closed for any length of time and vital supplies came in with commendable regularity.

Thank you all very much.

William Lancaster,
Director,
B.I.A.A.H.

Graham Philip,
Assistant Director,
B.I.A.A.H.

Censorship

To the Editor:

Because of the snow I found myself in one of Irbid's cinema halls. It was my first visit since 1982. I was stunned at what I saw. I decided to visit two other cinema halls the next day. I was shocked even more.

They were showing pornographic movies. The majority of the spectators were under 18, rather about 12 to 17.

I find it irresponsible on the part of the cinema owners and terrible greediness to accumulate money in an immoral way. I am a foreigner, I could keep quiet and watch. I have lived in Jordan for a long time, I love Jordan and the Jordanians. I remember that I am a foreigner only when I renew my residence permit.

My concern for Jordanian youth is genuine. Therefore, there should be an age limit or a change of showtime, that is after 8 p.m., when kids are certainly at home with their parents.

Ibrahim Abdallah,
Irbid, Jordan.

A sight for sore eyes

To the Editor:

Harrah for Najwa Anabtawi's letter of Sunday, February, 16! I couldn't agree with her more. At a time when we are becoming our city with ghastly billboards, No, Najwa, you are not alone in your protest. I have talked to many influential people about just this, and you see what results I've had!

One of my major disappointments is with those who are advertising. Most of these leading companies pride themselves on being "modern, educated and socially aware." If they are any of these, why have they been attracted to advertise in such a polluting and offensive manner?

Too bad the government didn't allow these signs a few years sooner; we could have saved a lot of money when our former mayor set about beautifying Amman. Little did he know, the solution is: Don't spend money beautifying, let others pay, and cover it all with hideous billboards.

Karen Astour,
P.O. Box 6367,
Amman, Jordan.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

كنا من الأمل

Moufid Shehab — top advocate for law and order

By Katia Sabet

CAIRO — As the head of the International Law Department at Cairo University, a member of the government's Consultative Council, and president of the Commission on Arab and International Security, Dr. Moufid Shehab is one of the Middle East's most respected, experienced law men. Now in his middle 50s, he is a distinguished authority in international arbitration, particularly matters concerning borders between Arab countries. He is an advisor to the government of President Hosni Mubarak, and his opinions are often solicited by the media. He recently agreed to an interview in Cairo.

Egypt's Dr. Shehab was a key figure in the protracted negotiations with Israel to settle the dispute over the Tabna enclave in the north of the Sinai Desert. He argued Egypt's case in a special court set up in Geneva. "Israel had refused to let the case go to the International Court of Justice in The Hague because it did not believe in the

U.N.'s impartiality, and, therefore, mistrusted one of its institutions," he says. "Israel always considered the U.N. to be biased in favour of Arab countries." In September 1988, the special court finally ruled in favour of Egypt, ending a thorny issue that had been festering since 1982.

Even though independent courts can help unlock situations, Dr. Shehab remains a strong advocate of the International Court of Justice as an institution and favours an enhanced role for it in international relations. "An international organisation like the U.N. is inconceivable without an (effective) body specialised in settling conflicts through the application of international law," he says. "International law is as important for the world community as domestic law is for the internal affairs of a given country. This is why the International Court was set up in the first place. At the time when the U.N. was called the Society of Nations, the court was known as the Permanent International Court of Justice. The existence of this

court is essential, not only as a legal body but also for its consultative role."

For the moment, he adds, "unfortunately, its role is only modest. The court can function only when conflicting parties agree to submit their case to it. Countries prefer political solutions or armed confrontation. The court has rarely ruled, but in the few cases it has, the decision has stood the tests of time and of political change."

Dr. Shehab, who earned a law degree from the University of Alexandria, his native city, went on to further his studies at the Sorbonne in Paris, earning diplomas in public and international law. His doctoral thesis on the international court of the Hague was awarded first prize for the best thesis of 1963.

International law should be the foundation of relations between countries, and democracy should be the basis of relations between a people and its government, argues Dr. Shehab. "Some people think it is impossible to have a democracy in the Third World and that the masses

there aren't ready to exercise power. But power in the Third World is often usurped by individuals. These dictators may have good intentions, but they are not prepared enough or lack the necessary qualities to reach these goals. The only solution for people is freedom, respect for human rights and true democracy."

Democracy has its faults and is constantly being tested, as is currently the case in Algeria. "It is true that people sometimes make mistakes, often because they are not sufficiently well-informed," Dr. Shehab says. "And there are other problems. Election results of democratic elections can be falsified. Votes can be bought. Democracy has its shortcomings, but that is no reason to give up on it. I feel sure a people who bring a dictator to power learn a lesson. And in the final analysis, only democracy gives people a chance to correct mistakes."

Admitting to ingrained optimism, Dr. Shehab says he believes that mankind is slowly moving towards greater

respect for the law. That lesson takes time to learn, sometimes as long as a generation. "We have to teach our children the principles of democracy from the earliest age. These principles should be applied to all aspects of life and human relations: In the home, at work, in our institutions, everywhere!"

"Democracy isn't just the relationship between a government and the governed," he explains. "It is a way of life, a way of thinking. That is what we have not yet learned in the Third World." People who are oppressed are easy prey, he notes. "To the weak, a dictator appears as the strong man who will avenge their misery and wretchedness. The weaker and more miserable they are, the more they see the dictator as the incarnation of power, strength and glory."

Dictators take advantage of that, while genuine democratic leaders often pay a high price for sticking by their principles, Dr. Shehab adds. "Democratic leaders are in power to follow their destiny to the end, to death if necessary. Take Kennedy and

Sadat. They were assassinated. Look at Carter. He was ridiculed by the media. And now Gorbachev, dismissed without regret by his people."

If democracy and respect for the rule of law are the future, the present includes many glaring "mistakes" to correct, according to Dr. Shehab. For example, the Israeli government's refusal to halt settlements in the occupied territories while negotiations are going on negates all hopes for peace. "Israel knows that once the peace negotiations truly get under way, a solution will have to be reached and that solution may not be to its taste," Dr. Shehab says.

"We have entered an era that favours collaboration between states and solving differences through peaceful and legal means rather than by force. In this case, people's rights have been usurped and their land occupied by force. These breaches of international law must be put right, and this is a truth the Israeli government does not want to face. It seems to



According to Dr. Moufid Shehab many international conflicts would find long-term solutions if nations agreed to the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice in the Hague.

think that by obstructing the peace process and presenting the world with a series of fait accomplis it is going to preserve the status quo. Sooner or later, no matter how long this usurping lasts or how many times the law is broken, Israel will end up with its back against the wall because of public opinion."

Even though Dr. Shehab's voice is heard at the highest levels in his country's government and at international institutions, he has chosen to focus on teaching, putting his

expertise at the service of the next generation. In addition to being a professor at two of Egypt's leading universities, four years ago he was appointed director of the International Institute of International Affairs, a higher education institution set up in collaboration with France. Dr. Shehab emphasises that he wants to continue sharing his knowledge. "Teaching is what interests me most. That is what gives me most satisfaction," he says — World News Link.

James A. Michener — the storyteller inspired by mortality

By Michael Perry

SYDNEY — His fragile body moves cautiously across the hotel foyer aided by a silver walking stick and a pair of probing eyes.

James Michener is one of the world's great storytellers, but at the age of 85 the body no longer keeps up with the mind.

Yet it is Michener's mortality which has been the driving force in the tall Texan's life — without it, he says, he would probably never have put pen to paper.

Although he walked away from three aircraft crashes during his tours of duty in the South Pacific as a naval lieutenant in World War II, the turning point in Michener's life was a precarious sunset landing in New Caledonia.

"That was so crucial that as an intelligent person you couldn't back away from it," Mr. Michener told Reuters in an interview after a swing

through the South Pacific.

In his recently released autobiography *The World Is My Home*, A Memoir, Mr. Michener describes the incident in religious terms: "Was this powerful experience on a dark airstrip a theophany... an appearance of God to a human being?"

"But as the stars came out and I could see the low mountains I had escaped, I swore: 'I'm going to live the rest of my life as if I were a great man.'"

More than 40 years later Mr. Michener believes he has fulfilled that commitment, but makes the distinction that he is not a great man. "I have lived as if I were. I have fought the good battles."

After that near miss, Mr. Michener began writing his first book by the light of a smelly lamp in a naval hut on the mosquito-infested Island of Espiritu Santo in what was then known as the New Hebrides, now Vanuatu.

Tales Of The South Pacific was a collection of tales not about the Pacific, but about men and women and war, written not for self-gratification, but for the people at war. It was his place to escape the ravages around him.

"I can honestly say that when I wrote that, I envisaged the time 20 years hence when they would want to buy the book as a memorial of the great adventure of which they were a part," says Mr. Michener.

"It is interesting that in peace time on Guadalcanal they have a constant flow of men returning to places they vilified when they were younger."

Mr. Michener says he would never denigrate war as he believes it to be one of mankind's "essential non-senses", which can inspire individuals to greatness.

Tales Of The South Pacific won the 1947 Pulitzer Prize, though Mr. Michener says it

was luck, not his writing skill, that brought him the award — coming as it did only hours after he was dumped by his first literary agent, who said he had no future as a writer.

"Accidentally my book stumbled into the 1947 judging, the only year in which it had a chance of winning, and it found that haven by pure luck," Mr. Michener writes. Despite writing millions of words, filling 33 books and co-writing two others, Mr. Michener rejects the title of author.

"I do object to the public preserve of being an author, I find it distasteful," he says.

Mr. Michener prefers the tag "storyteller". In his book he likens himself to an ancient storyteller who sat by the campfire at night regaling hunters about their prowess.

"The job of an apple tree is to bear apples. The job of a storyteller is to tell stories, and I have concentrated on that obligation," he writes in

his memoir.

"I write at 85 for the same reasons that impelled me to write at 45 I was born with a passionate desire to communicate, to organise experience, to tell tales that dramatise the adventures which readers might have had."

Mr. Michener says his writing style is simple and honest, aimed at creating an ambience in which the reader feels comfortable.

"When people start one of my books they find then very formidable and a lot of people never get past the first couple of chapters," says Mr. Michener, a trained historian.

"But an enormous number do get past and find that when they get into it they are living in an ambience that has been created by paragraphs. I almost think I see things as paragraphs."

Mr. Michener's mortality loomed large in his life on a number of occasions — each

time inspiring his writings.

In 1965 he suffered a massive heart attack. After six weeks in hospital Mr. Michener returned to his study to resume compiling a book on Leningrad, but to his horror he had lost his focus and the book was never completed.

"Some major change had taken place in my life and I left the study distraught," writes Mr. Michener. "For more than a week I lived in fear that I might never be able to regain intellectual control over my writing."

But he was spurred to begin a book on Spain.

At 60, Mr. Michener, who says he still does all his own research, decided he should run with the bulls in Pamplona.

On his fourth attempt he reached his designated "safety spot," but unlike the previous mornings a disoriented bull veered across the narrow lane, killing two men before

stopping six inches from his chest.

Mr. Michener went on to write *Iberia*, the book he says will probably live the longest. "Iberia played a focal role in my rehabilitation as a writer," writes Mr. Michener.

In 1980 Mr. Michener underwent a quintuple heart bypass, dental reconstruction and had received a new left hip. These "rusty nails," as he describes them in his book, jolted him into a prolific spurt of writing which saw him write 11 books between 1986 and 1991.

"I knew what my ambitions were, but I was doubtful about my capacity to fulfill them," he writes.

So how many books are left in Mr. Michener's imagination?

"I has been a wonderfully exciting life — about 38," chuckles the ageing storyteller.

Independence means issuing stamps — or trying to

By Carrie Figdor
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Shortly after it declared independence last June, Croatia took a classic step towards proclaiming national sovereignty: It issued stamps.

Some didn't have gum and had to be cut apart with scissors. One series commemorated airmail routes established when the resulting civil war interrupted surface mail delivery.

They were the first Croatian stamps since World War II — sort of. Because Croatia's independence was not established, they were used "more or less out of pride" next to Yugoslav stamps, said Ekrem Spahich, executive secretary of the Croatian Philatelic Society in Bager, Texas.

But the desire for physical proof of independence was there — as it has been in the former Soviet republics, the Baltics, and other new or reborn nations. As the real world changes, the stamp world — an odd mix of reality and wishful thinking — follows suit.

In October, Moscow issued a "victory of democratic forces" series commemorating the three men who died in the failed August coup. They were among the last

Soviet stamps and the first since Czarist times to show the Russian flag.

Armenia's first stamp since it became part of the Soviet Union in 1922 is expected to honour a multinational corporation — U.S.-based American Telephone and Telegraph, which installed telephone switching equipment in the capital Yerevan last October.

A January 1991 shipment of Lithuanian stamps, printed in Leipzig, Germany, was impounded at the Lithuanian border by Soviet officials until the Soviet Union recognised the Baltic state in September.

None of the new stamps approaches in value the jewels of the philatelic world, valued at over a million dollars each. These include an 1856 penny magenta British Guiana stamp, an 1855 Swedish three-skilling stamp printed in the wrong colour (yellowish instead of blue-green), and an 1840 penny black British stamp pasted on the inverse side of a mailready envelope — an envelope with the postage printed on it.

Rarity is one of the prime determinants of stamp value. In general, stamps are issued today in quantities that prevent their prices from rising above face value.

Philately has never quite

recovered from the boom-and-bust market of the late 1970's and early 1980's, when non-philatelist investors saw stamps as a good short-term investment and inflation hedge. Prices zoomed when they entered the market and plunged when they left.

But the new issues, while not raising stamp prices, are giving new life to philately as a hobby.

"I don't think the new issues will raise values but it will affect collecting. People will collect the new stamps and then go back for the old ones," said Keith Wagner, executive director of the American Philatelic Society (APS).

The APS estimates there are some 250,000 serious stamp collectors in the United States. The major industrial nations — Britain, Germany, France and Japan in particular — also have many collectors.

Most philatelists collect stamps from their own country or that of their forebears. But anything is fair game — at least one U.S. philatelist collects stamps from Memel, an area in Lithuania that was briefly autonomous between the world wars.

"Stamps are little pieces of paper with historic and geographic significance. You get to possess a chunk of his-

tory," said Michael Schriber of Linn's Stamp News, the leading U.S. philatelic weekly.

The history displayed can be both symbolic and deceptive. Glasnost brought with it Soviet stamps commemorating former non-persons Andrei Sakharov and Boris Pasternak and British double agent Kim Philby.

But east Germany ignored its merger with west Germany — Oct. 3, 1990 — and issued stamps the day before that celebrated international aeronautics and the 100th anniversary of the death of Heinrich Schliemann, who found Troy.

Yugoslavia also looked the other way as it was falling apart. While Croatia issued stamped envelopes that displayed the plea "stop the war in Croatia" in English, Yugoslavian stamps showed birds, flowers and Olympic events.

Now, with international recognition of Slovene and Croatian independence, stamps from those states are being used internationally without Yugoslav stamps.

Collecting new issues can be tricky because it isn't always clear when a stamp is legitimate.

A stamp is whatever a nation's postal authority issues and accepts for postage.

Sometimes a stamp is valid only within a country and for mail to its neighbours.

About 10 years ago, a rebel group in Eritrea — which plans a referendum later this year to cement its independence from Ethiopia — had stamps printed, but they were sold only to dealers, not in Eritrea. Those stamps were not considered legitimate, said Denise Hatton, a new issues expert with Linn's Stamp News.

But last October, a new stamp from Eritrea was used to mail an envelope to Indiana.

For other countries, such as those once in the Soviet Union, it's a matter of picking up where they left off decades ago.

The first new Estonian and Latvian stamps, issued in October, show each nation's coat of arms and denominations without a currency symbol — likely in anticipation of dropping the Russian ruble.

A Soviet stamp program agreed upon in March — before the Soviet Union broke up — will be carried out by the new Commonwealth of Independent States. But no "commonwealth" stamps are planned, said Jim Helzer, executive secretary of the Russia Stamp Agency of North America, which sold Soviet stamps.

How Raquel and Antonio captured Tunisians' hearts

By Abdul Aziz Barrouhi
Reuters

TUNIS — Forget the heroes of American soap operas such as Dallas and Dynasty when in Tunisia. They are out.

J.R. and company have been replaced in the hearts of Tunisian viewers by an unlikely pair called Raquel and Antonio, stars of a Mexican serial called *You Or Nobody Else*.

The series ended last week. But it is still the topic of conversation in Tunis and the television station that aired it is inundated with calls for a re-run.

"Show it again and again, we'll never get tired of it," a 22-year-old girl wrote to the ruling party newspaper *Le Renouveau*.

For more than three months, Raquel and Antonio seemed to take over the everyday lives of Tunisians.

Riots broke out in the southern Tunis suburb of Ben Arous when a power failure interrupted viewers' regular date with the pair, according to a Tunisian newspaper.

Another daily reported that a young wife had run off

with her brother-in-law after one episode inspired her to take revenge on her husband.

The story revolved around a rich handsome man called Antonio, his evil brother Max who, in order to inherit Antonio's fortune, tries to kill him in a plane crash, and marry a beautiful girl called Raquel.

Believing Antonio has died, Max takes Antonio's identity and arranges a fraudulent marriage with Raquel. But Antonio escapes the plane crash and returns home. Raquel falls in love with the real Antonio, and they spend the rest of the serial fighting off the evil schemes of Max.

Posters of Raquel and Antonio were snatched up at a dollar a piece.

The latest episodes were the only subject of conversation on public transport, in the office, at school and at home, the ruling party newspaper *Al-Horria* said.

Tunisian papers were full of anecdotes about the lives of Raquel and Antonio.

A family demanding a large dowry for their daughter's hand in marriage were told, "but she is not Raquel."

A pregnant wife was ordered by her husband to watch every episode of *You Or Nobody Else* and to keep her eyes on Raquel, "so that the baby will look like her," he writes.

Another journalist claimed to have attended a funeral where the mourners argued noisily over the physical and moral qualities, not of the dear departed, but of the actors in *You Or Nobody Else*.

Salem Labbene, Tunisia's best known drama critic, said the serial was inspired by American and Egyptian productions and offered viewers an unusual escape from reality. Raquel and Antonio represented a physical ideal — and a moral ideal with which viewers could identify.

One leading journalist wrote in homage: "Oh Raquel... I swear that you are the modern woman who has most captivated our admiration and who has bewitched us... to you a thousand salutations, loves and passions... we passionately await your next series."

No one yet knows when that may be.

How to plan for your wedding

By Maha Addasi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — My fiancé and I want to write a book which we want to call "How to plan for your wedding," and which might eventually be picked up by Steven Spielberg for a movie.

We discovered that as a book, "how to plan for your wedding" will not need much editing, especially that it will have chapters that are very precise and to-the-point.

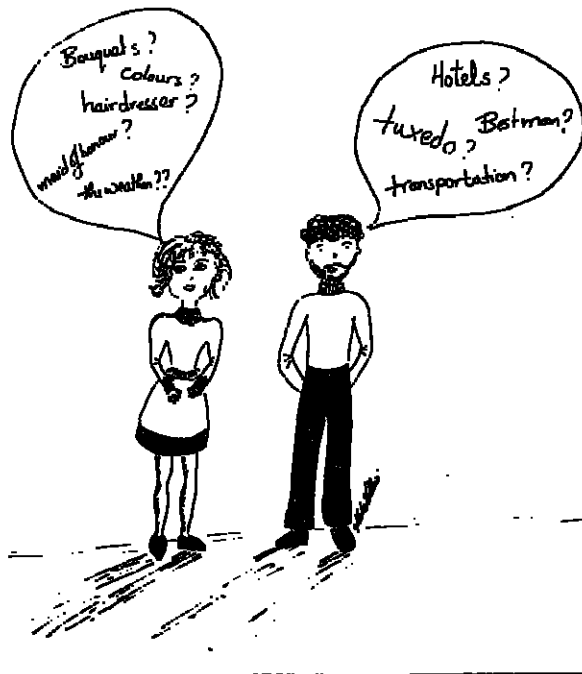
Chapter one will give advice to new couples. "If you are thinking of making your own wedding preparations," it goes, "don't". End of chapter one.

Only those very persistent couples who are set on getting married will continue to chapter two after such a "heart-wrenching" warning. And that chapter basically consists of a complete list of "things to do to prepare for the wedding." It also includes the number of times you have to do each one before you make up your mind.

For example, To decide on where to hold the wedding reception you spend as many days as there are hotels in the country taking a first look. So let us assume there are four hotels. You spend four days just "looking around". Then you go back to each hotel on separate days to talk to the sales people, who each say that they are "the greatest". This makes it so difficult to make a choice that you start waking up in the middle of the night and imagine hotel names all over the ceiling. And each morning at breakfast you think you have made up your mind about the hotels. But, "out of experience" I can tell you that when you think you have made up your mind you have only scratched the tip of the iceberg of hotel-decision-making! You still have at least 10 more days of going around hotels before coming to the final conclusion.

Another example is selecting the wedding invitations, which again takes a minimum of six trips. Three trips to decide on the cards and three trips to the print-shop where the "hotel of your choice" should, at last, be printed on the invitations by the printers in the shop you have finally decided on.

That is not all. You must remember, the wedding rings (and the best man to remind the groom of the rings), the bride's dress, and the groom's suit, the band, or the D.J. The menu, the shape of the wedding cake (round, square, heart-shaped, rectangular. Again, the choices are limit-



less), the flower decorations (we were lucky, here. Only two kinds of flowers survive in snow. Carnations and mums), the bridal bouquet, the photographer, the video guy, the flower girls, the hairdresser, and most importantly, the invitees. Not to mention the honeymoon destination, the tickets, the hotel reservations and the visas. Nor to mention "house-hunting", and selecting furniture.

So by the time the couple exchange their, "I do's" they are almost bald from pulling their hair and could prove they were under the influence of a type of temporary insanity called "decision making".

Chapter three of the book will say that if the couple have managed to follow the steps in chapter two they deserve to be congratulated. They are made for each other. A match made in heaven to survive hell on earth.

They managed to live through the first decision-making situation in their life together — guaranteed not to be the last.

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, Feb. 20

8:30 Spatz

The Royal Visit

The committee from London prepares to open the Spatz restaurant for fast foods; and the owner's wife goes through a final check-up before they arrive.

9:10 NBA Basketball

10:00 News in English

10:20 Movie of The Week

Brother By Choice

Starring: Charlie Higgins

Scott is not getting along with his father so he leaves his home and Brett goes after him to persuade him to return home.

Friday, Feb. 21

8:30 Lenny

Lenny's wife expects him to receive a fat reward for having returned a wallet that he found.

9:10 Derrick

Tod Eines Junger

Under certain conditions, even gentle people can be murderers.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Chancer

Lies

Stephen is offered a job by Franklin, Jo's father. Meanwhile Jamie, Robert Douglas's son, commits suicide in the woods.

Saturday, Feb. 22

8:30 America's Funniest Home Videos

9:00 Encounter

9:30 Stamps Of Greatness

The life and works of the famous Greek composer Dvorak who lived in the 19th century.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Feature Film

A renowned journalists is



(Left to right) Christopher Noth, George Dzundza, Michael Moriarty and Richard Brooks star in the drama series Law And Order on Sunday at 10:20.

Monday, Feb. 24

8:30 Land Of Hope And Glory

Gloria introduces American ways in the guided tours of the British Beaumont House.

9:10 Capital City

Friedman, the corporate financiers tries to take over Shane Dealers. There is a lot of anxiety but the deal fails to get through.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Gambler

Brady Hoax goes after the Macord gang to save his abducted son and rid the West of the gang.

Tuesday, Feb. 25

8:30 Evening Shade

Vote Early And Vote After Everybody will vote for the wife to become the district attorney.

9:10 Golden Years

Pressure increases on Michael, the director of the city council, as radical groups in the city draw a conspiracy plan against him by using the services of a beautiful woman.

10:00 News In English

10:20 GBH

Wednesday, Feb. 26

8:30 Teach

Carnival Knowledge

9:10 World Of Audubon

The Island At The Galapagos

The islands are 16 in number and are in a world of their own. They tell the story of evolution. But their isolation ends as modern world arrives.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Burning Shore

The rebel Boer and his men get a pardon and mother and child return to their relatives.

Epilogue to Amneh

By E. Yaghi

Today as I fought my way through drifts of snow, I looked up at the clouds which enveloped the earth and surrounded me and I remembered how at this time just a year ago, two tragedies struck my life a day apart. The first incident that occurred was the American bombing of the Amiriyah civilian shelter in Baghdad. Even though I wasn't personally involved in this massacre by air, I couldn't help but feel deeply wounded that any nation or coalition of nations could incur such horror, harm and death on innocent civilians. Now, a year later, Iraqis continue to be victims of the U.S. led aggression and suffer from sanctions and embargoes which cause sickness and death while Western leaders exuberantly claim credit for the battle that they so unfairly won.

The second tragedy hit me nearer to home and happened only a day after the bombing of the Amiriyah shelter. It was on this desolate day when Jordanians still outraged about the unwarranted attack and the resultant deaths of innocent Iraqi citizens, many of the children, that my sister Amneh died. Although Amneh's gone now and no one can replace her, her children have gotten accustomed to getting on with their lives. Abdul Fattah, her youngest child, is now in the third grade, doing quite well in school and adjusted to the great change that rearranged him. His three older brothers have fared acceptably too and Shatha, their older unmarried sister, has just completed the first phase of her Tawjihi exams. As for Amneh's husband, well, he made sure he didn't loose any time at all without a wife and as soon as the traditional 40 days of mourning passed, quickly married another woman and carried on like a teenager who was never wed during his matrimony. However, one year later, Amneh's husband has settled down some and stopped boasting so much about his feat of a second marriage.

Abdul Fattah's stepmother hasn't taken his mother's place, but she nonetheless surprisingly has provided him with a true love that stems from her good heart and has given the young boy the succor he so desperately continues to need. In spite of the fact that she herself will soon become the mother of her own baby for the first time, it is most likely that her compassion for Amneh's children will not decrease. So Amneh's kids have been saved from

becoming the victims of a cruel stepmother and instead reap the blessings of a caring human being living and sharing their home.

The cute little house that Amneh made and called home now rings to the ownership of Sarah's (2nd wife) care and the cozy little kitchen with white cupboards fringed with brown where Amneh used to whip up spicy delicious meals and the best mint tea of all her relatives, now succumbs to the Sarah's attempts to provide meager substitutes. In the sitting room where my sister once sat on her red Persian carpet, her replacement now sits, laughs and watches the same mahogany television that Amneh once watched, guarded over by a gold-plated fan which circulates smothered air on hot summer evenings, encircled by Amneh's former husband and five children.

Far away across the Atlantic, lives Amneh's oldest child, a married daughter who at the time was unaware that her mother was dying. By her side now toddles Amneh's first and only grandchild, a beautiful infant that she never set eyes on.

But, life moves on for the living. Amneh along with those Iraqis who so bravely died during the Gulf war are now but memories to those who survived them. Although most jobs are done by people who place much importance on their work, motherhood is usually thought of to be the most important job of all. Yet, Amneh's children quite quickly learned to live without her as well they must, eating, laughing, playing, studying and sleeping their days away. But if such a virtuous and pious person as I perceived my sister to be isn't missed much by even her children, I have concluded that no one is indispensable. Amneh's husband who she faithfully served for over twenty years, seems contented with his second wife as though the first never existed and proud of the prospect of becoming a new father. He is making plans to add another floor to his house to have space for his new brood of children.

Also, most of the world has forgotten the Amiriyah shelter and the Gulf war and the tragedy they imposed on a helpless and guiltless people. Children and babies continue to suffer and die and like my sister soon become just memories and statistics. My faith in humanity was acutely shaken and even crushed by the war. These wounds plus the loss of my beloved sister Amneh will be very slow to heal.

By John Follain
Reuter

Film director Zeffirelli proud to be loudmouth

ROME — Franco Zeffirelli is proud of his new reputation as Italy's biggest loudmouth.

Zeffirelli's targets are many and varied. The film and opera director has recently launched a vitriolic attack on some Arabs, sided with soccer hooligans and condemned a mediaeval horse race in Tuscany.

Sixty-nine Wednesday (Feb. 12), Zeffirelli, acclaimed for such films as Romeo And Juliet and Jesus Of Nazareth, is unrepentant.

"I am the boy in the famous tale of the Chinese emperor," said Zeffirelli, who directed Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton in the 1960s box-office hit The Taming Of The Shrew.

"The child said the emperor was naked when everybody else was saying he was dressed in finery," he said in an interview at the Rome Opera House during a break from rehearsals for Puccini's La Boheme.

Last September Florence-born Zeffirelli had to resign from the board of his beloved club, Fiorentina, after defending football hooligans who taunted rivals Juventus

about their 39 supporters killed at the Heysel Stadium in Belgium in 1985.

Before a match against Juventus, the Florentine fans chanted the numbers from one to 39. This started running fights between the two crowds.

"People ask me: 'Why do you have to say these things? Why do you get on people's backs?'"

"I've always had the cult of sincerity, of saying this is false and this is true," said Zeffirelli, a devout Catholic since a near-fatal car crash in 1969.

He firmly opposes pornography and was expelled from the Italian Film Writers' Association for his outspoken criticism of films which he considers lewd or obscene.

He attracted yet more controversy in December by attending a ceremony in L'Aquila in central Italy, where the Roman Catholic

archbishop unveiled an anti-abortion "Monument to the Unborn Baby" in the municipal cemetery.

After Saudi Arabian customs seized a film he had made on Tuscany on moral grounds, Zeffirelli told a newspaper interviewer in December: "Sometimes I think we did the wrong thing in intervening in the Gulf war. We should have let them kill each other."

He has continued to denounce the Arabs who, he says, wouldn't allow the documentary on Tuscany "just because there is a naked Venus by Botticelli and the David by Michelangelo."

He has had no second thoughts either about attacking the traditional bareback horse race, the Palio, held in the central square of the Tuscan town of Siena. Twenty-two horses have been put down after being injured in the last 21 races.

"Why shouldn't I say that they drug horses at the Palio, poor beasts? Four died last July. Of course, you say something and there's a huge rumpus." The town council is suing him.

Zeffirelli has earned mixed reviews for his latest film. He brought Hamlet to the screen with Australian actor Mel Gibson, better known on film for his Mad Max role than for Shakespearean soliloquies.

Now the workaholic Florentine, apart from opening the season at Milan's La Scala with Verdi's Don Carlo, plans to dig into his youth with a film on the virtuoso soprano Maria Callas.

Callas was a close friend until her death in 1977 and he directed her in five operas.

"I got close to making a film on her three times, and I dropped it three times. I'm still full of doubts, just because I knew her so well," said Zeffirelli.

"I feel very embarrassed. It's like writing an autobiography and mentioning people who are dead and who are not there to defend themselves. The only thing that will make me do it is the thought that if I don't, somebody else will."

Women's film festival

invites an intimate view

By Samuel Perry
Reuter

SEATTLE — An energetic group of film enthusiasts has assembled one of the world's widest ranging — and most personal — exhibitions of films made by women.

The sixth international festival of films by women directors resisted feminist labels by selecting a broad range of films. It also omitted much of the socializing that occurs at festivals where film distributors and judging take centre stage.

"We never chose films for political reasons," said organizer Peggy Case. "The purpose of this festival is for people to have a personal experience with the director."

"Women just have this profoundly different cultural experience from men in our society. Their voices just haven't been heard as much before," she said. "You just scour the earth for a handful

of excellent films filmed only by women."

The result was an eclectic array of short and long films. "I don't know what a women's film is — and most women directors run like hell from the notion that they produce 'women's films,'" said film critic Ella Taylor of LA Weekly.

The sentiment was echoed by many of the participants — who range from feminist German filmmaker Margarethe Von Trotta to John Lennon's widow, Yoko Ono.

Ono's experimental movie Bottoms, showing a series of close-ups of naked buttocks, was in the festival.

"Women filmmakers have the same right as any people to explore anything they like," said Australian director Jocelyn Moorhouse. Her spirited Proof, about a triangle of relationships around a blind photographer, opened the three-week festival, which ended on Feb. 8.

Proof, Moorhouse's first full-length feature film, explores Martin's distrust of the world around him and his quest for proof of events which he cannot see.

Along the way, Martin (Hugo Weaver) toys with the unrequited love of his housekeeper Celia (Genevieve Picot) and a new acquaintance, Andy (Russell Crowe), whom Martin asks to describe what is pictured in the uncanny, somewhat photographs he takes.

At the festival, each evening was devoted to the work of one director, who was generally present to discuss it afterwards with the audience.

This allowed Moorhouse to describe how she had created the character of Andy after her brother, an easy-going cook with a maddeningly good-natured attitude, and how Martin's lovesick housekeeper came to be so mischievous.

"I've always loved wicked

women," she said. "My thought was to have a deliciously wicked woman in the film."

Proof, due to open in New York this year, has had a long run in Australia and opened in London and Paris in November.

Other filmmakers featured in the festival included Mira Nair, whose Mississippi Masala is an exuberant comedy about the love affair of an African-American man (Denzel Washington) and a young Indian woman (Sarita Choudhury) in a ramshackle Mississippi town.

Also on show was Dorota Kedzierzawska's Diabli, Diabli — a 1991 film built around the tensions between inhabitants of a tiny Polish village and gypsies who camp on the outskirts of the village.

Julie Dash's American film Daughters Of The Dust chronicled a black American family at the turn of the century.

Opera is top of the pops in Britain

By Jill Serjeant
Reuter

LONDON — Opera, long the preserve of the middle-aged and middle-class in Britain, is shaking off an elitist image and enjoying the limelight in a transformation of popular culture.

Record sales are booming. Travel companies offer trips abroad to hear international tenors and sopranos in concert. Advertisers promote products on television to the music of Mozart and Bach.

Italy's Luciano Pavarotti is the star of what has been dubbed "popera" since British television chose his rendering of the aria Nessun Dorma from Puccini's opera Turandot as its theme tune for the 1990 soccer World Cup.

"Pavarotti has become a kind of national hero in Britain. Football fans now sing Nessun Dorma on the ter-

aces," said Terri Robson, director of Decca Records in Britain.

Essential Pavarotti, a collection of opera arias and Italian folk songs, was the first classical music recording to reach the top of the pop charts in the summer of 1990 and has sold more than one million copies.

New Zealand soprano Kiri Te Kanawa opened last year's rugby World Cup singing to Holst's Jupiter Suite and appeared on Britain's top teenage music show when the record became a bestseller.

Decca has exploited the growing interest with a Mozart compilation and a selection of opera highlights, both of which have sold well.

Pavarotti's film of Rigoletto is being promoted with the line "You've heard his Nessun Dorma, now hear his La Donna E Mobile" in a poly more in tune with marketing a new rock album.

"There is definitely a new

audience for opera," Mr. Robson said. "I think younger people may be tiring of pop music and in a time of recession maybe want to spend their money on something more permanent. Classical music lasts for ever."

Britain's prestigious Royal Opera House put the seal of approval on "Popera" when it moved out of its chandeliered Covent Garden home and into a 7,500-seat arena next to Wembley Soccer Stadium for a 10-day staging of Turandot last month.

In a deliberately populist approach, the £2.5 million (\$4.4 million) production — in a venue more accustomed to electric guitars than violins — was marketed in adverts on buses and underground trains as featuring "the world's most popular aria."

Britain's biggest-selling tabloid the Sun ran a competition for free tickets and issued a guide telling readers that Puccini ("pronounced

poocheeny) was a lad about town, a womaniser who enjoyed a bottle of wine, yachts and motorbikes.

Tickets averaging about half the cost of a night at Covent Garden ensured an encouraging 75 per cent capacity, promoter Raymond Gubbay said.

"I think there is an audience waiting to be brought into the opera house. One of the ways you can do this is to bring them to productions like this as an introduction to show them that opera is not terrifying or difficult," he said.

"Also you are getting away from the rarified atmosphere that you get in an opera house where people are inhibited when they go through the door and see the red plush carpets and the black ties and the champagne flowing."

Mr. Gubbay said he hoped to take Turandot to large and unconventional venues in

other British cities and was looking at opportunities in Europe and the United States.

Big pop concert-style screens at Wembley carried English subtitles so the audience could follow the opera.

"The message we are trying to put out is that you don't really need to know anything about it... it's like seeing a musical, albeit sung in Italian, but with English words up there to follow," said Mr. Gubbay.

Champagne was on offer in the interval but there was strong competition from the hamburger bar.

Many of the people milling around the Turandot T-shirt and coffee mug stalls were wearing trainers and there was little taffeta in sight.

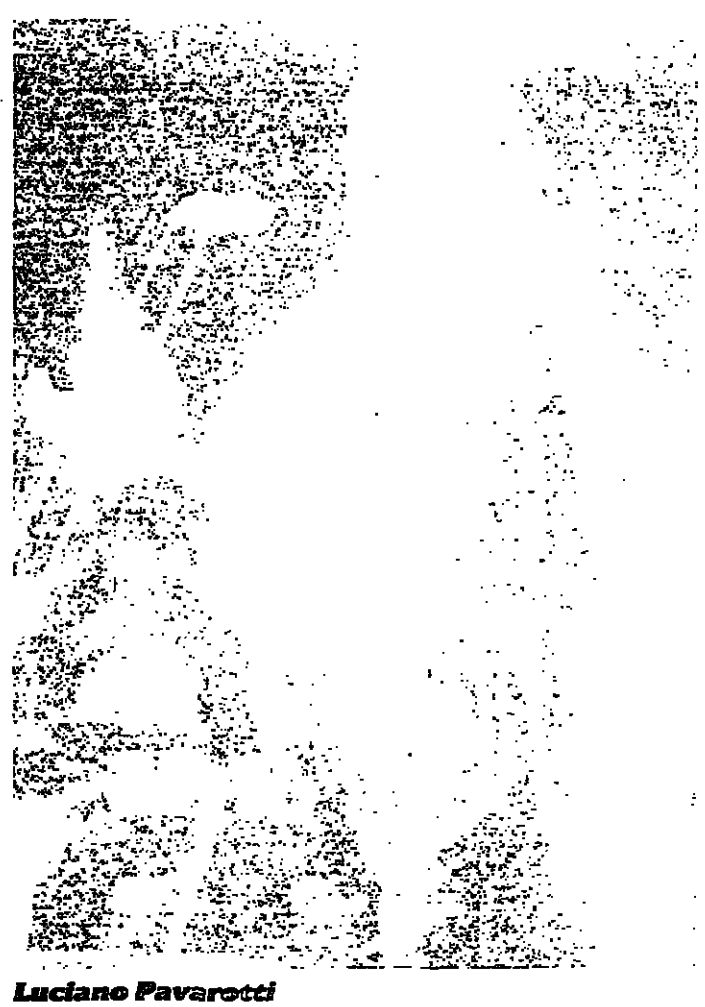
Mr. Gubbay said the classical music world was drawing on the experience of pop promoters in merchandising and technology.

"We have learnt a lot from the rock world and we have benefited from the technology they have developed in terms of lighting and sound," he said.

The Royal Opera House, facing a deficit of about £3 million (\$5.3 million) for 1991, saw the show as a rare chance to persuade a wider audience that opera can be good entertainment.

"High quality doesn't necessarily mean elitism," said press officer Helen Anderson. "The approach in other countries to opera is entirely different to the elitist attitude in Britain."

But it is still not known how many of those who bought recordings and flocked to events such as Pavarotti's free concert in London's Hyde Park last year are now crossing the threshold of Covent Garden or its less expensive cousin the English National Opera (ENO).



Luciano Pavarotti

Graphic sex in new French film has tabloids gossiping

By Andrew Gumbel
Reuter

PARIS — The sex scenes in Jean-Jacques Annaud's new film *L'Amant* are so realistic that nobody can quite believe they were staged.

"Did she or didn't she?" Was the big question splashed across the British tabloid the Sun about the star of the film, 18-year-old Londoner Jane March.

Elle magazine was in no doubt after seeing the movie, an autobiographical tale of erotic awakening in 1920s Saigon based on the award-winning novel by French novelist Marguerite Duras.

"They were really making love," it declared. The question of what exactly March got up to on

camera with her Hong Kong Chinese co-star Tony Leung has had downmarket newspaper and magazine editors around the world panting with excitement since the film came out in late January.

However the fuss has amused neither the actors, both of whom deny the rumours, nor Duras, who is so incensed at the adaptation of her book that she has completely disowned it.

L'Amant — The Lover — tells the story of a 15-year-old French girl who escapes from her unhappy, impoverished family in colonial Vietnam into the arms of a rich Chinese man 17 years her senior.

While the novel, which won France's prestigious Prix Goncourt in 1984, is an incisive meditation on self-

discovery and the clash of two cultures, the film pulls few intellectual punches.

From the first moment when Leung takes March's hand on the back seat of his chauffeur-driven Morris Leon Bollee convertible and puts it between her scantily clad legs, it is clear that the main focus of interest is to be raw sex.

There is plenty of it — wild moans on the floor of a bachelor apartment in the dingy Chinese quarter of Saigon, the delicate caress of Leung's hand on March's heaving breasts, warmly lit shots of the couple making love.

"I wanted to give the impression that we were hiding nothing," Annaud, the 48-year-old director, told the French magazine *Le Point*. "I

made the images more and more realistic, so that each time we were surprised how far we would go..."

It was comments like that which started all the rumours.

Leung didn't help matters by telling a Hong Kong newspaper: "During shooting, we didn't really act. I tried by best to make her fall in love with me and I tried my best to make myself fall in love with her."

Leung's wife was evidently not thrilled. "I can't say that she loved watching her husband making love with another girl on screen but she knew that it wasn't real," Leung said.

Duras, at 78 the grand dame of French literature, is furious at what has happened

to her book. She is no longer on speaking terms with Annaud.

"Where is his soul, where is his personality?" she fumed in a rare interview on French television, adding: "My Chinese lover, the real one, was far better looking."

This is not the first literary outing for Annaud, having already adapted Umberto Eco's best-selling novel *The Name Of The Rose* for the screen in 1986.

Annaud recounts how Eco used to tell him: "As long as you don't piss on my book in public you can do what you like." It is the kind of author-director relationship he now dreams of.

Duras, he said, would argue endlessly over details — once spending three hours

insisting that the description of a pothole in the screenplay should be "muddy" rather than "boggy".

"I couldn't take it any more. I kissed her, told her 'you were thoroughly horrible today', and never went back," he said.

Duras took her revenge by publishing her own separate screenplay *"L'Amant de la Chine du Nord"* (the Lover from North China), which became a bestseller in France.

The controversies appear to have done little harm to the film's fortunes, though. It shot to the top of the French box-office list despite mixed reviews, superseding even Oliver Stone's blockbuster *JFK* which came out the same week.



Director Jean-Jacques Annaud

A star-studded, busy second half of the season for Broadway

By Michael Kuchwara
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Forget Nick And Nora, the season's biggest musical flop, and the fact that only one new American play arrived last fall.

Broadway will have one of its busiest, star-studded springs in years with more than two dozen productions promised before the Tony nomination deadline at the end of April.

Consider just two offerings: *Death And The Maiden*, a London success by Chilean novelist Ariel Dorfman, and a revival of Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*. The first stars Glenn Close, Gene Hackman and Richard Dreyfuss, directed by Mike Nichols. It arrives on March 17.

The second, opening April 12, features Jessica Lange as Blanche Dubois and Alec Baldwin as torn t-shirt hero Stanley Kowalski. The director is Gregory Mosher, who used to run the Lincoln Centre Theatre.

And the parade of stars doesn't stop there. Alan Alda, Ellen Burstyn, Stockard Channing, Joan Collins, Sherry Easton, Ben Gazzara, Judd Hirsch, Gregory Hines, Raul Julia, Stacy Keach, Al Pacino, Estelle Parsons, Tony Randall and Lynn Redgrave also are scheduled for appearances. Even names not usually associated with the theatre, such as Rob Lowe and Griffin Dunne, will brave the critics.

"This just happens to be a very fruitful spring," says Michael David, one of the producers of a \$5.5 million revival of *Guys And Dolls*, arriving April 14 at the Martin Beck.

Most producers now like to

open shows in the spring, which is when Tony Award nominations are announced. But happenstance plays a big part, too, in when productions finally make it — or not — to Broadway.

"I guess it's so busy because when things are ready, you'd just better do it," David said. "The fact is that when an actress is ready, when a director is available, when you've raised your money and you can get the theatre you want, you'd better go ahead."

And they have. Most of the upcoming plays, many by major playwrights, have readily recognizable stars. The musicals, with the exception of *Jelly's Last Jam* which stars Gregory Hines as Jelly Roll Morton, don't.

Lowe has a small role in *A Little Hotel On The Side*, an adaptation of a Feydeau farce by John Mortimer, the Britisher Behind the Rumpole Of Bailey television series. The play, starring Tony Randall and Lynn Redgrave, has a Jan. 26 opening at the Belasco Theatre. It's the second play of the season for the National Actors Theatre, the company founded by Randall.

Dunne stars in *Search And Destroy*. Howard Korder's dark comedy about the American dream. It opens on Feb. 26 at Circle In The Square.

Among the better-known writers returning to Broadway are Neil Simon, August Wilson, Lanford Wilson, Herb Gardner, John Guare and Alan Ayckbourn. Even *Will Shakespeare* will be represented with *Hamlet*, no less. Stephen Lang plays the melancholy Dane. He opens on April 2 at the Roundabout

Theatre Company's new home at the Criterion Centre.

Revivals of Noel Coward and Henrik Ibsen are also on tap. Joan Collins and Simon Jones play the battling lovers in *Private Lives*. They start the fisticuffs on Feb. 20 for what is an eight-week engagement at the Broadhurst. Earle Hyman is the title character in *The Master Builder*, beginning performances in March for the National Actors Theatre.

Jake's Women, Simon's latest play, stars Alan Alda as a middle-aged writer ruminating about the women in his life. It arrives on March 24 at, where else, the Neil Simon Theatre.

Lanford Wilson's *Redwood Curtain*, starring David "St. Elsewhere" Morse and Debra Monk, concerns an Amerasian and her search for her American father. Look for it on April 9 at the Nederlander.

John Guare has come up with the most intriguing title of the season — *Four Baboons Adoring The Sun*. The play, according to Guare, is "All about love," and stars Stockard Channing and James Naughton as two archaeologists on a dig in Sicily. It begins preview performances in February with an opening scheduled sometime in March at Lincoln Centre.

August Wilson's *Two Trains Running*, set in the turbulent 1960s, checks in April 13. The latest in Wilson's plays chronicling black experiences in this century, it stars Roscoe Lee Browne.

Conversations with My Father, the new play from Herb Gardner, arrives on March 22, starring Judd

Hirsch. Alan Ayckbourn's *A Small Family Business*, with Brian Murray, comes in a month later.

Shimada, by Australian playwright Jill Shearer, sounds topical. It concerns the Japanese buyout of an Australian bicycle company. Ben Gazzara, Ellen Burstyn, Mako and Estelle Parsons star. The play opens on April 23.

Stacy Keach comes to town on April 22 in a suspense thriller called *Solitary Confinement* by Rupert Holmes, the man behind the musical *The Mystery Of Edwin Drood*.

In the musical categories, the emphasis is on revivals. Besides *Guys And Dolls*, there will be new productions of *The Most Happy Fella*, Frank Loesser's 1956 musical hit, and *Man Of La Mancha*, starring Raul Julia and Sheena Easton. *Fella* sings out on Feb. 13; *La Mancha* opens on April 24.

Another "new" Gershwin musical, in the vein of *My One And Only*, premieres on Feb. 19 at the Shubert. It's called *Crazy For You*, and features Gershwin standards plus several unknown songs by George and Ira. It apparently bears only a passing resemblance to the 1930 Gershwin hit *Girl Crazy*. The stars are Harry Groener and Jodi Benson, the voice of *The Little Mermaid*.

The most unusual musical of the spring could be *Metro*, arriving on Broadway direct from Poland. The plot concerns a group of performers who entertain on the subway, and it's the biggest hit in Warsaw. The original cast is learning English for their Broadway debuts. It opens on April 16 at the Minskoff.

1791 — Mozart's last year

In 1791, the year of his death, Mozart was 35 years old. He lived in Vienna, and Vienna (the court and the aristocracy) did not like him. They would only listen to Salieri, the chapel master in receipt of a good pension. Wolfgang Amadeus had the not very brilliant status of composer of the imperial and royal chamber. So he was asked to compose dance music and nothing else, as if he were good for nothing but producing minuets. At that same period, his friend and admirer, Haydn, was famous in England.

By Jean-Marc Dupuich

PARIS — In 1790, a new emperor had come to the Austrian throne. Leopold II replaced his brother Joseph II. The new monarch, who had already been crowned as the Holy Roman Emperor of the Germanic nation in Frankfurt, was to be enthroned as king of Bohemia in Prague.

The festivities of the coronation naturally called for an opera. Salieri was asked to write one. As Haydn was in England and the director of the Vienna Theatre was replacing him beside the Hungarian Count Esterhazy, the chapel-master Salieri did his duty and momentarily took over the theatre. So he was too busy. It was then that the court remembered Mozart. ("1791, Mozart's last year", by H.C. Robbins Landon).

On Aug. 25, accompanied by his wife Constance, Mozart set off for Prague, putting the three-day journey to good use by working on his *Titus* which he had barely begun. In 18 days, the opera, including the rehearsals, was ready. On Sept. 6, on the evening of the coronation, it was performed. The empress supposedly spoke of "German filth". It was a failure.

The disappointed musician left the Bohemian capital where he had always been

given the best reception. The *Marriage Of Figaro* had gathered together the enlightened aristocracy, the bourgeoisie and the popular masses in a burst of enthusiasm. His music could be heard "in all the streets and all the gardens" and to such an extent that the inhabitants of Prague had ordered a new opera. This was *Don Giovanni*.

Mozart is sunshine

Back in Vienna, Mozart finished *The Magic Flute*, on which he had already made considerable progress before his stay in Bohemia. Even in Prague, where he was busy composing *Titus* with the time limit, he did not forget the *Flute*. Nissen, Constance's second husband, wrote that Mozart, who regularly played billiards in a café in order to relax, hummed a tune which, shortly after he played on the piano. This was the quintette of Tamino, Papageno and the three ladies.

The person who commissioned the opera and wrote the lyrics was an old friend of the musician's, Schikaneder, the director of the Freyhause-theater. The first performance took place on 30 Sept. Amid the whiffs of smoked sausage, the working-class public triumphantly acclaimed the *Flute*, sympathizing with the jovial Papageno, while Tamino's in-



Don Giovanni of Mozart produced by Richard Foraman at the Lille Opera.

itatory journey from darkness to light spoke of wisdom to those who would hear it.

Mozart also composed a concerto for clarinette and a cantata before surrendering his life in his final bequest, the Requiem. He had been commissioned to write this shortly before the coronation, probably in July. A mysterious messenger had asked him for a "Mass for the Dead." It is now known that this anonymous person acted on behalf of Count Walsegg who had just lost his beloved wife in the prime of life and, being a bit of a musician himself, had the habit of secretly acquiring musical scores and then passing them off as his own creations.

Mozart returned from Prague tired. He had already experienced fainting spells there and on Nov. 20 he had to take to his bed. There was talk of poisoning. In spite of his weakened state caused by

his illness, he went on composing. "working like Raphael" as his Transfiguration with the constant feeling of approaching death". Dies Irae. The weather in Vienna was apocalyptic. An unhealthy southern warm, humid and oppressive wind followed on the torrential rain, snowstorms and icy squalls.

"His last gesture was an attempt to imitate the kettledrums of his Requiem with his mouth", Constance's younger sister, Sophie, remembered. Nissen had noted: "His death drew public attention. People stayed outside the window of his apartment, waving their handkerchiefs. Vomir suddenly spurted from him in the shape of a rainbow. It was 0.55 a.m. on Dec. 5, 1791. A century later, the Prague composer, Anton Dvorak said: "Mozart was sunshine" — *L'Actualite En France*

Britain's cradle-to-grave free health care shakeup: a dose of capitalism

By Karin Davis
The Associated Press

LONDON — While President George Bush offers new proposals to provide health care for nearly all Americans, British politicians are fighting over ideas to make their comprehensive National Health Service (NHS) work better.

With more than 900,000 people waiting for health care in England alone, health care has become a key issue in the national election that

Prime Minister John Major must call by summer.

Ten months ago, the government injected a dose of capitalism into Britain's Socialist-oriented health service, which is funded by taxes and provides free treatment for poor and rich alike.

The reforms were inspired by American academic Alain Enthoven, who proposed a competitive market within the NHS "to reward doctors and hospitals for doing a better job."

Essentially, the govern-

ment is allowing hospitals and doctors to have their own budgets, and buy services from the most efficient providers.

Health Secretary William Waldegrave said the reforms are improving efficiency and cleaning up "an administrative slum."

The opposition Labour Party, protective of a system it created 44 years ago, has accused the Conservatives of allowing the best and quickest treatment to go to the highest bidders, and of chop-

ping the NHS budget.

"The NHS is seriously underfunded and many hospitals are in serious financial difficulty, and to wipe out the deficit they are going to have to cut back on patient care," Robin Cook, Labour's spokesman for health issues, said.

Labour's charge that the government is "privatising" the health service was the centerpiece of its successful campaign to win a special election last summer in Monmouth, a Welsh district held

by Tories for 25 years.

Under the new rules: — Hospitals can be run by self-governing trusts instead of the Health Department.

So far 57 of the 2,000 hospitals have accepted the deal. Some immediately announced layoffs and budget cuts, including Guy's, a noted South London teaching hospital founded in 1721.

— District health authorities can get quotes from different hospitals and buy treatment, ranging from

emergency surgery to long-awaited hip replacements, instead of simply funding the local institution.

— General practitioners get their own budgets from the government to buy hospital services for their patients. So far, 1,720 Britain's 31,200 general practitioners have signed up.

Under a patient's charter launched by Mr. Major nearly a year ago, the government promises that after April 1, no patient will have to wait longer than two years for an

operation. But the time begins to run only after the patient has seen a specialist, which may mean waiting six months or more.

That's a big promise with 916,938 people in England alone on the service's impatient waiting list, where 136,450 of them can expect to stay for more than a year.

Janet Rathburn's daughter Sarah, 10, waited a year for open-heart surgery at Alder Hey Children's Hospital in Liverpool.

"It was one of the worst

experiences of my life," says Mrs. Rathburn.

As a result of the reforms, Alder Hey is now offering fast-track heart surgery to health districts that agree to pay £7,500 (\$12,500) on top of standard fees.

Some waiting lists are shrinking. The number of people waiting for more than two years for treatment fell by 8,000 or 16 per cent, from April to September, the government said. That left 32,810 still waiting more than 24 months.

Cancer drug, insecticide found in 'Indiana banana'

By Paul Raeburn
The Associated Press

CHICAGO — A simple, inexpensive new test has led to the isolation of a powerful anti-cancer drug and a safe, natural pesticide from the paw paw tree, sometimes called the "Indiana banana," a researcher said.

The cancer drug, which has so far been tested only in animals, is 1 million times as potent as the widely used cancer drug Adriamycin, said Jerry L. McLaughlin of Purdue University.

The National Cancer Institute has expressed interest in the drug and has begun its own tests. Dr. McLaughlin said at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

The pesticide, a chemical cousin of the anti-cancer drug, could be used by greenhouses and truck farms and could be worth as much as \$500 million a year, Dr. McLaughlin said.

The paw paw is a shrub-like tree with edible fruit shaped like bananas. It grows all over the eastern United States. The substances Dr.

McLaughlin identified are found throughout the tree, but mostly in twigs and small branches.

The key to the discovery of the two substances in the paw paw tree was a new screening test McLaughlin devised to rapidly identify potentially useful drugs and pesticides in plants.

The test is based on the fact that most drugs, given in high enough doses will kill.

Dr. McLaughlin exposes tiny brine shrimp, raised in a laboratory aquarium, to plant extracts. If the shrimp die, the plants contain drugs. If the shrimp live, the plants don't, Dr. McLaughlin said.

In a second step, McLaughlin then takes potentially useful plant extracts and puts them on plant tumors growing in the laboratory. If the tumors die, the extracts are further tested for potential anti-cancer activity.

The tests are far cheaper and faster than testing drugs against human cancer cells or in mice. Two other conventional ways of screening plants, Dr. McLaughlin said. It costs less than \$10 to test a

plant compound, he said.

Equipment to do the test costs \$22, Dr. McLaughlin said, and \$30 buys enough brine shrimp to last a year.

Jack Plimmer, a retired U.S. Department of Agriculture chemist who spent most of his career examining plants for drugs, said Dr. McLaughlin's method is highly effective and particularly useful for developing countries.

"It's one of the best I know about," Mr. Plimmer said. "The tests we had were cumbersome... and it would take months to get results."

Dr. McLaughlin said the anti-cancer drug from the paw paw acts on cancer cells in a new way, possibly opening the door to an entire new class of anti-cancer drugs.

"It pulls the plug on cell energy," he said. "Most cancer drugs don't work that way." Many conventional drugs interfere with cell growth by attacking the cancer cells' genetic material, he said.

Although the fruit is generally considered edible, Dr. McLaughlin said he decided to test the paw paw because

of a childhood experience with its yellow fruit. "It ate four or five when I was a kid and threw up. I knew there was something biologically active in there."

The screening method helps researchers cope with a dizzying number of compounds in plants, he said.

Each plant can contain hundreds of potentially useful chemicals. "If you start isolating those compounds one at a time, you're going to have a lifetime's work on one plant," he said.

Dr. McLaughlin said commercialization of the paw paw pesticide faces a tremendous obstacle. Testing a new pesticide for safety — to comply with environmental protection agency requirements — costs some \$20 million and takes five years, he said.

Even though the potential return is high, companies already making profits on sales of existing pesticides have no incentive to invest that much money in a new one, he said.

"We simply cannot get manufacturers to consider this," he said.

U.S. awed by medical advances, lost sight of costs

By Jacqueline Frank
Reuters

WASHINGTON — Sometime in the past thirty years, Americans became mesmerized by all the sophisticated new medical technology they could buy and failed to see that their reliable, cheap health care system was slipping away.

Now they are telling Congress, President George Bush and presidential candidates of all political stripes they want it back.

In a poll taken by CBS after Mr. Bush's state of the union message Tuesday, nearly half, 47 per cent, said they would pay higher taxes for free health care.

But health care analysts on all sides of the issue said they cannot see national health insurance coming in the United States in the near future.

Mr. Bush will make his case on Feb. 6 for a health reform plan that will continue reliance on the private insurance system. Opposition Democrats who control both houses of Congress have said they want some type of government-funded insurance plan for those who are uninsured.

Here are some key facts about U.S. medical care:

— The United States spent \$738 billion on health care in 1991, more per person than most other industrial countries and a dramatic increase from the \$27.1 billion spent in 1960. The price tag is expected to rise to \$817 billion this year.

— An estimated 37 million Americans are without health insurance to pay for basic or catastrophic care and 20 million are underinsured. The rest — those not covered by programs for the poor and elderly — are worried that a loss of coverage and serious illness would devastate them financially.

Health insurance paid for by employers rather than individuals evolved after World War II. To get around a federal wage freeze, companies offered it as an inexpensive benefit to woo choice management prospects but unions quickly caught on and soon it was an expected benefit for all workers.

"Employers got into it when it was not a burden to do so," said Harvey Sloane of Health Care For America.

But it has become a burden. Business, labour, consumer groups and the medical community all advocate some form of change in the combination public-private

medical payment system.

Chrysler Chairman Lee Iacocca said health care costs have eroded his company's ability to compete with Japanese products. Each new car includes \$700 worth of health insurance premiums for Chrysler employees, he says.

Rising costs of health insurance have become the biggest single source of strife between labour unions and management. Three fourths of all strikes in 1989 were over worker objections to paying a larger share of insurance premiums.

Small businesses are having trouble buying health insurance for employees. It is either too expensive, or the industry and workers are seen as a "bad risk" or employees have preexisting conditions that make them ineligible for coverage. The self-employed can rarely afford anything but coverage against catastrophic illness.

The National Association of Manufacturers, representing 13,500 companies, is typical of the business groups that want change to "offer some relief to those currently struggling to afford health care."

In the 1970s spending on medical care rose rapidly but was not out of line with infla-

tion in other goods and services. In the '80s, general inflation cooled but health care costs kept climbing and insurance premiums skyrocketed.

"The major problem for people who have insurance is the rapidly accelerating cost. It is rapidly becoming unaffordable for the middle class," said Ed Rothchild of Citizen Action, which supports a government-funded universal insurance plan.

Marilyn Moon of the Private Urban Institute noted that improved safety and accuracy of diagnoses and treatment have led to more value for the dollar and more dollars spent.

For example, exploratory surgery which was once needed to diagnose internal disorders has been replaced by magnetic resonance imaging and cat scans.

Hospitals compete for this technology, passing the costs along to patients who may not need it. Those who are insured are forced to pick up the tab for patients who cannot pay.

"You don't have to be very sick to have very high expenses. We like to have answers and doctors are likely to keep testing until they find an answer," Ms. Moon said.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

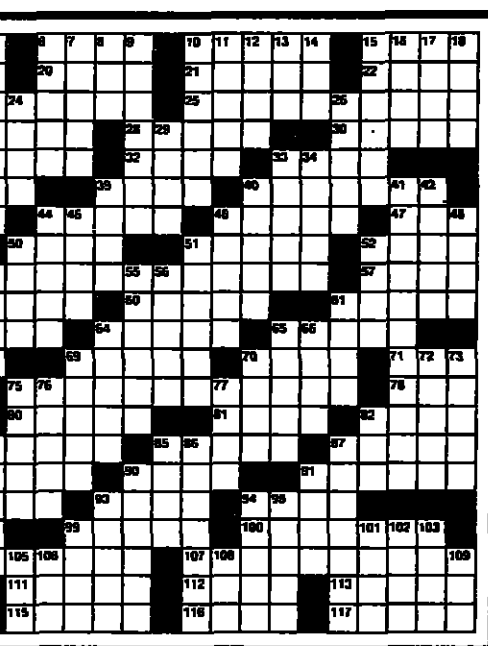
MONOCHROME
By Raymond Hamel

ACROSS
1. Rodeo place
6. Jazz phrase
10. Demolish
15. Ruse — (act)
19. Mississippi River
20. Ford city
21. Mushroom
22. Motto of opera
23. Of a working group
25. Felt domino hit
27. One clam
28. Solzhenitsyn's
30. Great care
31. Fine spray
32. God of war
33. Type of questing
35. Hooded snakes

DOWN
1. Consumer agency
2. Breathing sound
3. For the money
4. A huck out of you
5. Dexterity
6. Crossword
7. Small body of land
8. Sunshine St.
9. Accepted
10. Walked bravely
11. Throwing weapons
12. Cut — (adverb)
13. Golf ball holder
14. Shade tree
15. Norman neighbor
16. The king
17. — instant (immediately)

39. Roman poet
40. Small kangaroo
41. Bay window
44. Whimsy
46. Indian royalty
47. Served
49. Pool Whelan
50. Kind of ray
51. Mushrooms
52. Green veggie
53. WWII command
54. Suddenly
57. Cad
58. A Harrison
59. — Reeper
60. Parts
61. Dred
62. Motorless
63. Sharp-souled fish
64. Sharp-souled fish
65. Pullman bed

67. Saturate
68. Toolbooks
69. Carry
70. Carry
71. Military
72. Freud's associate
73. Freud's associate
74. Freud's associate
75. Freud's associate
76. Freud's associate
77. Freud's associate
78. Freud's associate
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91. Freud's associate
92. Freud's associate
93. Freud's associate
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95. Freud's associate
96. Freud's associate
97. Freud's associate
98. Freud's associate
99. Freud's associate
100. Freud's associate



Last Week's Cryptograms

1. Good poet wrote a merry and witty poem for grateful lady friend.
2. Live radio and TV vie for good coverage on election front.
3. Starry grocery clerk led to smile when new bride was looking for scratch to make cake for hubby.
4. Slip in bathtub or shower will result in pain.

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. EG NC BEOP. JUSTOKEGJ UYSYNG
DOUBOL DOUBOL CRY PEST WUDDRYLOH
TUGRL UGH BOKC LRKO NYLWLOL.

—By Ed Eddelstone

2. CVO TRSZOIC RKIRSPZINI CVO VNII RE Y
XYCCTOIPYWO NP CVO ZYXW. —By Gordon Miller

3. TUX VWYAZ UZB BUCKDXFS BCY HSYCKDX
TYSXD YXHCSSJXX YT WUCKDXFS BCSLZE
XYCKD UVX CZBFS HSLKDX ADLFX
WLEKDX.

—By Philip Brennan

4. POISOYVOH SILVRHQ HAHQIBLRWLVA
XYYZ-XYYZ XZYFA FYERFIIH WYIV
BAHQRPOL.

—By Rita Salvato

Diagramless

1. Bending custom
2. Cumbersome
3. Cash register
4. sign
11. Word of woe
12. Curved molding
13. Tortoise's trail
14. The king
15. instant (immediately)

22. WWII agency
23. Lamb's ma
24. College yell
25. Mabel's brother
26. Revolving part
27. Denominator
28. Prepare for
29. publication
30. Great
31. Jacket or collar
32. Mineral spring
33. Clam

42. Great disaster
43. Crude condition
44. Historical
45. period
46. Railroad
47. Wind instrument
48. Tide
49. Chop roughly
50. Push
51. Make a mistake
52. Come afterwards
53. Showed selfishness
54. Color
55. Group: labor

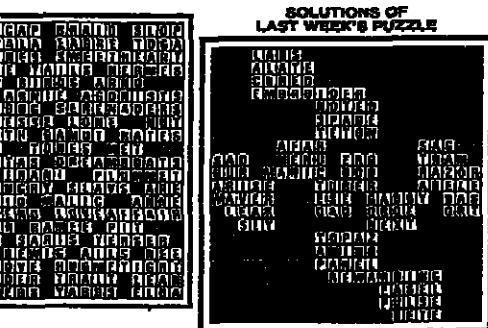
59. Formal hd
60. Heb. month
61. Cortan
62. detector
63. —do well
64. Seagull land
65. Feet
66. Chicago baseball
67. Ger. city
68. —in one's
69. Earthenware pot
70. Walked
71. Back of the neck
72. Folio
73. Field unit

DOWN
1. Endure
2. Away from the
3. Manned
4. District of London
5. Lab gel
6. dried up
7. Obey
8. Pictorial sleuth
9. Mineral rocks
10. Impudent speech
11. Rises

12. —Abrar
13. Winkles
14. Underwater
15. detector
16. Unintentional
17. Land
18. Time
19. Merciless
20. Persecution
21. Star
22. Drink slowly
23. Ted or Tina
24. Andy Taylor's boy
25. Guys from Dixie

33. Undergoes
34. chemical change
35. Scorchy roof
36. Legend master
37. —do well
38. Troop unit: abbr.
39. Chicago baseball
40. Ger. city
41. —in one's
42. Earthenware pot
43. Walked
44. Back of the neck
45. Folio
46. Field unit

59. Formal hd
60. Heb. month
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73. Field unit



Canadians happy with health system despite long waiting lists

By Deborah Charles
Reuters

TORONTO — Canadians say their health care system may be a bit mismanaged and not the most innovative in the world, but it is dependable, comprehensive and — best of all — free.

The Canadian system has been in the spotlight lately as many Americans, facing alarming cost hikes and widespread lack of health insurance, point to their northern neighbour's plan as a model for affordable national coverage.

When asked to compare their national health coverage, which soaks up a large percentage of their tax dollars, to the U.S. system, most Canadians minimize their grievances and rate their superior.

They say complaints about

mismanagement of funds, long waiting lists and delays to see specialists or have tests are secondary to the security of knowing they will be taken care of if they get sick.

The best thing about the system, Canadians say, is that it knows no economic boundaries — the rich and the poor are treated alike.

It is not unusual, for example, to see a homeless person on the streets of Toronto with a cast on a broken arm or leg.

In the United States, in contrast, an estimated 37 million people have no health insurance, public or private.

"We have a very good system, especially compared with the U.S.," said Perry Cohen, owner of a clothing store in downtown Toronto. "Here we have free enterprise with a heart."

"I used to live in the U.S.," said William Mur-

dock, a 75-year-old pensioner. "Here it's much better. You pay for everything in the U.S."

Every president of Canada is covered by the Universal Care System, which is run by the provinces. Individuals receive a plastic health card which they show when they go for a doctor's appointment or a test.

Some critics charge that since health coverage is extended to all without user fees people abuse the system. Due to heavy usage, Canadians may be forced to wait up to six weeks to see a specialist for a non-emergency ailment.

"My mother goes to the doctor for everything," said one businessman. "At least once a week she's there."

Doctors usually condone such practices, noted a physi-

cian's daughter, because they get paid according to how many patients they see. "They'll see them for one minute and still get paid — some of them have to."

A controversial rule was recently approved in Ontario to put a cap on the amount of bills a physician can submit. Near the end of 1991, some specialists closed their doors because they had already reached the province's billing limit of 400,000 dollars (\$350,000) a year.

In order to cut down on abuses, Quebec has proposed applying a small fee to people who abuse emergency room services.

Despite overuse, Canada spends just under 9 per cent of its gross national product on caring for the sick, compared to 12 per cent in the United States.

Genetic cause for muscular dystrophy identified

LONDON (R) — A genetic defect linked to the most common form of the wasting disease muscular dystrophy has been identified for the first time, an international scientific team said.

There is now no cure for the muscle wasting disorder but doctors said the discovery is the first step towards developing medical treatments that would target the genetic flaw.

Myotonic dystrophy, an inherited form of the disease, strikes at least one in every 7,500 adults worldwide but

the incidence is probably higher because it is hard to diagnose in mild cases.

It usually shows up in adulthood and leads to spasms and wasted muscles. Most victims die in their fifties or sixties from heart or respiratory failure.

A team of scientists from the United States, Canada and Britain, backed by an international project to map all the human genes, found that a segment of the 19th human chromosome is larger than normal in people with myotonic dystrophy.

Chromosomes are the proteins that contain the genetic blueprint of all living things. There are 22 pairs of human chromosomes plus two sex-determining chromosomes.

The researchers said the larger the segment, the more severe the symptoms, and the variable nature of the defect may explain the vast differences in the severity of the disease and in the age of the victims when it strikes.

Abnormally large segments of two other chromosomes have already been linked to a form of mental

retardation and to other types of muscle disease.

The team spent four years searching for the defect and reported their find in the papers published in the Nature Science journal recently.

The scientists still do not know how the defect leads to the production of myotonic dystrophy genes but they said they were sure the discovery would lead to the isolation of those genes.

Once the genes are identified, drugs or other treatments can be designed that can target them.

Hizbollah, Israel in duel

(Continued from page 1)

base safely. But a Hizbollah spokesman said Israeli helicopters hit an "empty civilian target" and no casualties were reported.

SLA-run Voice of the South radio on Tuesday issued an ultimatum to residents of three villages — Kafra, Yater and Qabatha — to leave by dawn on Wednesday to avoid "massive retaliation."

Reporters in Kafra and Yater on Wednesday afternoon found nearly all civilians had fled. But they also saw no gunmen on the streets or unusual movement on the Israeli frontlines.

Security sources reported no Israeli reinforcements of its troops in the security zone on Wednesday. But they said artillery batteries, tanks and other armoured vehicles were brought in on Tuesday.

Only about 100 people remained in Yater, hiding in basements and ground floor rooms. "We will stay here even if they destroy our homes on our heads," said Tahira Saleh, a widow. "We will never leave."

Kafra resembled a ghost town as the shelling picked up with only ambulances on the streets. Reporters found only about 25 women and old men hid in a

basement shelter in one building.

U.N. peacekeepers refused to allow people to drive into the three villages during the bombardment and because of sporadic sniping on some roads facing the edge of the security zone. "The situation in these (three) villages and the south as a whole is very bad," Gen. Wahlgren said.

U.N. deplores

The Security Council deplored on Wednesday the rising cycle of violence in southern Lebanon and elsewhere in the Middle East and called on all parties to exercise maximum restraint.

"The council deplores in particular the recent killings and the continued violence which threatens to claim additional lives and to destabilise the region further," an agreed statement read at a brief public council meeting said.

"The members of the council call upon all those involved to exercise the maximum restraint in order to bring such violence to an end."

The statement stemmed from a request by Lebanon for an urgent council meeting after an Israeli helicopter attack last Sunday killed Sheikh Abbas Musawi.

Palestinians arrive today

(Continued from page 1)

threatened by arrogant Israeli stands which underestimate the international public opinion, practices terrorism inside (the occupied Arab territories) and launches aggressions on Arab borders, as is the case with Lebanon," Mr. Qaddoumi said.

He said that Arab delegations to the next round of bilateral talks will stress the need to halt settlement activities in the occupied territories.

"Settlement activity should be stopped, and that should be the point where we start from to test Israel's willingness for peace, as well as the American intentions," Mr. Qaddoumi said. "There is a Security Council resolution which was approved by the European Community years ago: Resolution No. 465, which calls not only for a halt in settlement activity, but also for removing existing settlements," he added.

Mr. Hussein, said before his departure from Amman that his trip was "aimed at consultations with U.S. officials on the upcoming round of peace talks."

He refused to elaborate, but a senior Palestine Liberation Organisation official based in Amman said Mr. Hussein will discuss Israel's arrest of two members of the delegation.

Mr. Hussein told reporters after his arrival from the West Bank and talks with PLO officials Tuesday that a decision on Palestinian participation in the upcoming round of talks was pending PLO approval.

But hours later, a senior PLO official announced from Syria that the Palestinian delegation would attend the next round of peace talks scheduled for Monday in Washington.

European firms barter to break into new markets

By Daniel Liefgreen
Reuter

trale has said that it is planning to launch a new barter subsidiary.

It would aim to put together deals between Italian companies and countries which have liquidity problems, such as the new Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

In one recent transaction, Italian menswear company Ermengildo Zegna sold ties to a barter firm — which resold them in the United States, Czechoslovakia and Hungary — in exchange for "trade credits" to buy silk.

With great fanfare, French trade house Sucres et Denrees signed a \$130 million sugar-for-oil guaranteed barter deal last year with the Soviet Union.

The shipment of 300,000 tonnes of sugar was due to start in

November but has been delayed by the Soviet Union's breakup.

Another \$275 million food-for-oil deal, signed in November and involving French sugar and meat shipments, has run into problems because banks are hesitating to finance it.

"The main problem is Russia wants agricultural goods very quickly but Russian deliveries (of bartered goods) are slow," one Paris-based trade specialist said. "There are some (Russian) payment problems but nothing that can't be overcome."

Despite the financing snags, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) expects barter activity to be brisk.

"Although banks and other sectors agreed to defer payment of (loan) principal until the end of

March 1992 for the ex-Soviet Union, barter trade arrangements are likely to increase in importance in the effort to maintain grain imports," the FAO said in its latest world food outlook.

In the early 1980s, the U.S.

Commerce Department estimated that 30 per cent of all world business was conducted through some type of barter or countertrade.

But not everyone is happy with barter as a tool to break into new markets.

Algeria seeks loans

(Continued from page 1)

Adrar and in Salah, would open soon.

"In a few days we will know exactly the number of people who are going to remain in the placement centres," he added.

The minister forecast that "the great majority" of detainees would be freed within three to six months "if order is restored and the causes behind this situation are more or less mastered."

The authorities imposed the state of emergency after days of street fighting between the security forces and supporters of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). At least 50 people were killed and 300 wounded, most of them demonstrators.

In Abu Dhabi, Algerian Foreign Minister Lakhdar Brahimi said Wednesday that his country is seeking loans from the oil-rich countries of the Gulf to support its economy.

"We are in need of loans and we are certain that countries of this region will give Algeria whatever they can," Mr. Brahimi said on arrival in Abu Dhabi.

The Algerian foreign minister is on a tour of the Gulf Cooperation Council member states — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the United

Arab Emirates.

He is delivering messages from the military-installed Algerian leader Mohammad Boudiaf to the leaders of the Arab countries, as part of a diplomatic offensive to muster support after the clampdown on the Muslim fundamentalists who were on their way to rule through the polling booths.

Algeria is member of the 13-nation Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries, OPEC, along with four of the six GCC countries.

Diplomatic sources said the Algerian government seeks financial assistance to pull out of economic hardships that are seen to be inflaming the political disturbances.

Foreigners arrested

Algerian security forces have arrested 11 foreigners, including five Sudanese and a British national, accused of masterminding violence in Algeria's western city of Oran, the Algerian news agency APS said on Wednesday.

The foreigners, registered as students at Oran university, also included two Lebanese, two Palestinians and a Moroccan, an official source said.

Iceland angered by Israel

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Hinniksson, whose Estonian name is Evald Mikson, has denied the allegations, which are similar to those made during hearings in 1962 in the then-Soviet republic of Estonia.

Icelandic Foreign Minister Jon Baldvin Hannibalsson said in comments published in the daily Morgunblaðið on Wednesday: "If the Israelis wanted to wreck this state visit of the prime minister of Iceland they couldn't have found a better way."

He said, "In my mind this is akin to leading a man into a

trap."

Mr. Oddsson told Iceland reporters the issue had cast a shadow over his visit to Israel, already clouded by increased military activity on the border with Lebanon.

"This letter could easily have been sent to me or Icelandic authorities in some other manner than during a state visit," he said. He said the matter would be discussed at the first cabinet meeting on his return home.

Mr. Oddsson said he had not raised the issue during talks with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir on Tuesday.

VACANCY

Convocation:	Free.
Post:	BUTLER - WAITER IN RESIDENCE.
Basic functions:	- Waiter functions - Cleaning - Receiving phone call
Requirements:	- Coming of age. - Be able to read & write. - In case of not being Jordanian, "residence permit" should be valid. - Languages: Arabic & English
Trial:	Interview in Chancery
Virtue value:	Experience in similar work.
Experience value:	10 points: - References, 4 points - Certificates, 3 points. - Languages, 3 points.
Law to be applied:	Jordanian Labour Law.
Salary:	506-dollars USA
Selection committee:	Embassy of Spain in Jordan.
Observation:	The selected candidate should pass a trial period of three months, before proceeding to a definitive contract.
Presentation of applications:	Embassy of Spain in Amman. P.O.Box 454 From: 19-02-92 to 03-03-92 - Curriculum Vitae. - 2 pictures. - Photocopy of residence or identity card.

VACANCY

Convocation:	Free.
Post:	Cook in residence.
Basic functions:	- Daily menu preparation - Preparations of official receptions. - Kitchen maintenance
Requirements:	- Coming of age. - Be able to read & write. - In case of not being Jordanian, "residence permit" should be valid. - Languages: Arabic & English
Trial:	Interview in Chancery
Virtue value:	Experience in similar work.
Experience value:	10 points: - References, 4 points - Certificates, 3 points. - Languages, 3 points.
Law to be applied:	Jordanian Labour Law.
Salary:	745-dollars USA
Selection committee:	Embassy of Spain in Jordan.
Observation:	The selected candidate should pass a trial period of three months, before proceeding to a definitive contract.
Presentation of applications:	Embassy of Spain in Amman. P.O.Box 454 From: 19-02-92 to 03-03-92 - Curriculum Vitae. - 2 pictures. - Photocopy of residence or identity card.

VACANCY

Convocation:	Free.
Post:	Domestic Assistant at embassy.
Basic functions:	- Cleaning. - Gardening
Requirements:	- Coming of age. - Be able to read & write. - In case of not being Jordanian, "residence permit" should be valid. - Languages: Arabic & English
Trial:	Interview in Chancery
Virtue value:	Experience in similar work
Experience value:	10 points: - References, 4 points - Certificates, 3 points. - Languages, 3 points
Law to be applied:	Jordanian Labour Law.
Salary:	506-dollars USA
Selection committee:	Embassy of Spain in Jordan.
Observation:	The selected candidate should pass a trial period of three months, before proceeding to a definitive contract.
Presentation of applications:	Embassy of Spain in Amman. P.O.Box 454 From: 19-02-92 to 03-03-92 - Curriculum Vitae. - 2 pictures. - Photocopy of residence or identity card.

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Alpine skier wins Sweden's first gold

ALBERTVILLE, France (AP) — Swedish Alpine skier Pernilla Wiberg won her nation's first gold medal of these winter games in the women's giant slalom Wednesday, and Germany stayed well ahead in the national medal standings with a gold in the women's 15-kilometre biathlon.

Wiberg, 21, a postal employee when she isn't skiing, ended 12 days of Swedish frustration at the Albertville Olympics by skiing off with the giant slalom title when other favourites faltered.

Sweden, one of the winter games' traditional powers, had managed only two bronze medals before the blonde skier won the gold.

Anita Wachter of Austria and Diann Roffe of the United States each won silver medals by clocking identical times for two runs down the sunny course at Meribel. Because of the tie, no bronze was awarded.

Antje Misersky of Germany took the gold medal in the women's 15-kilometre biathlon on the high-altitude, cross-country course at Les Sissies, with only one miss in her target shooting.

Svetlana Pechevskaya of the United Team took the silver, 11.2 seconds behind Misersky, also with one miss. Myriam Bedard of Canada overcame a two-minute penalty to clinch the bronze, 27.8

seconds behind Misersky.

With four days left in the games, Germany had a total of 24 medals, including 10 gold, to lead the national standings.

The United Team of former Soviets were second with 18 medals, including seven gold. Austria also had 18 medals, but only four are gold. Norway was fourth with 16 medals, including seven gold.

On Tuesday, it wasn't just one "bomb." It was an Italian explosion that echoed across the peaks of the French Alps.

And the second partner in the power skiing, Deborah Compagnoni, wasn't buying Alberto "La Bomba" Tomba's suggestion that his shattering of an Olympic slalom record was the end of the winter games site "Tombville."

"He gave me a bit of inspiration, but I did the rest. Frankly, I won the race," Compagnoni, who has trained with Tomba, said after outskating French favourite Carole Merle for the women's super-giant slalom gold medal Tuesday.

Agony replaced ecstasy for Compagnoni Wednesday, a leg injury ending her season less than 24 hours after she swept to gold in the super-giant slalom.

An Italian team spokesman said Compagnoni, 21, was almost certain to need surgery to repair torn ligaments in her left knee

after she fell near the top of the course in the first leg of the giant slalom.

Compagnoni got up clutching her knee, fell again in tears and was stretchered down the slope to an ambulance that took her to hospital in the Olympic village of Brides-Les-Bains.

The Italian spokesman said Compagnoni would be examined after her latest injury by the same French doctor who had previously operated on torn ligaments in her right knee.

Asked whether surgery was likely, the spokesman replied: "Almost certainly."

Compagnoni would not compete again this season, he said. On a day with only one other gold medal to be decided, ex-Soviets, French and German skiers and shooters were leading contenders in a 15-kilometre race in the new Olympic event of women's biathlon.

While Tomba was making history by winning the men's giant slalom — becoming the first Alpine skier ever to win the same event in two Olympics — the Germans were quietly padding their lead in the overall medals race.

Olaf Zinke's victory in the men's 1,000-metre speedskating gave the German's their ninth gold of the games, and 23rd medal in all.

Olympic chiefs get tough on weak performers

LA PLAGNE (R) — Bobsleigh chiefs plan to tighten qualifying rules for the Winter Olympics to weed out inexperienced drivers. The ban on weak competitors could also soon stretch to other sports in the winter games. International Bobsleigh Federation chief Klaus Kotter said Wednesday.

"The days of just turning up and competing are over. It doesn't work any more," Mr. Kotter told Reuters.

"We plan to introduce rules before the 1994 Lillehammer games only allowing racers to compete who have taken part in at least five World Cup races on three different tracks in the two years before the Olympics."

Accidents involving bobs from Mexico and Jamaica, two of the more exotic entries for this week's four-man competition, disrupted the third day of training Wednesday.

Javier Pedroche was taken to hospital with a suspected fractured shoulder after the Mexican bobs turned on its side after losing control in the final bend. The Jamaican bobs also turned over although none of the crew was hurt.

Kotter said International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Juan Antonio Samaranch had also been upset by an incident in Tuesday's men's giant slalom when Lebanese Raymond Kayrouz overtook Moroccan slowcoach Aj Hassan Mahta.

"We talked with Samaranch about the new rules yesterday," Mr. Kotter said. "There is not just likely to be a tightening-up in bobs but other disciplines like skiing too. It looks like the end for people like (British ski jumper) Eddie Edwards."

Edwards was one of the stars of the 1988 Calgary games despite finishing a spectacular last in the ski jumping event.

Before the Albertville games began Samaranch said competitors would have to meet strict qualifying standards to gain a place at the 1996 summer games in Atlanta.

"We will adopt a quota for each sport," he said on Feb. 7. "We don't want any athletes coming in five laps after the rest. That is finished."

The accidents followed a spectacular crash in last weekend's two-man event when the Puerto Rico bobs overturned high up on the course and slid down to the finish out of control.

Driver John Amabile was carried away on a stretcher and escaped without serious injury.

"The run was well prepared and very fast today," British coach Horst Hoernlein said. "Some of these drivers have never been so fast. These accidents are not good for the image of the sport."

Chang eliminated at U.S. Pro Indoor tennis

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Jim Grabb upset third-seeded Michael Chang 6-3, 3-6, 6-2 in the second round of the \$1 million U.S. Pro Indoor Tennis Tournament at the Spectrum.

With a back-hand passing shot down the sideline, Grabb eliminated Chang, 20, the 1989 winner of the French Open and the 12th-ranked player in the world.

On Thursday, Grabb will play

the winner of Wednesday's contest between Todd Woodbridge of Australia and Malivai Washington.

Earlier Tuesday, Rodolphe Gilbert of France upset eighth-seeded Richey Reneberg 6-4, 6-2.

"I have not been playing so well this year," said Reneberg, who reached the third round of the Australian Open and is ranked 30th in the world.

Lewis intent on regaining top spot in long jump

NEW YORK (AP) — After chasing the world long jump record for 10 years, finally surpassing it — and still not being No. 1 — Carl Lewis appears more intent on regaining the top spot.

Lewis, the two-time Olympic gold medalist in the long jump, never had reached 29 feet (8.84 metres), no less Bob Beamon's world record distance of 29-2 1/2 (8.90 metres), until accomplishing it three times in the World Championships at Tokyo last year. One of his jumps was 29-2 3/4 (8.91 metres), one-quarter inch (0.63 centimetres) farther than Beamon's best at the 1968 Olympics, but it was wind-aided, and would not have counted as a world record.

Meanwhile, Mike Powell got off a momentous legal jump of 29-4 1/2 (8.95 metres), shattering Beamon's 23-year-old world record and relegating Lewis to second place at the championships — his first loss after winning 65 consecutive competitions over 10 years.

"Mike was more prepared than I was and got the big jump," Lewis said Monday from Houston. "I jumped as well as I could under the conditions. Since then, I've worked on some things during the offseason. I'll be better prepared... I think I can jump 30 feet (9.14 metres)... if the conditions are right. Physically, there is no doubt I can jump that far. Of course, there are a lot of variables."

Those variables include his physical and mental condition, the weather, the runway and the competition. Lewis is preparing for all contingencies.

Most specifically, he plans to compete more times this year than last. Competing only once prior to the World Championships — a half-inch (1.27 centimetres) victory over Powell with his final jump in the National Championships — was not enough.

"This year, I think I will be able to jump farther than last year, because I'll be better prepared," Lewis said.

This time, he will be more competitively fit. He already has jumped once, winning at 27-10 1/4 (8.49 metres), at Stockholm, Sweden, and will jump again indoors at the Mobil Championships on Feb. 28 in New York's Madison Square Garden.

Outdoors, he plans to jump in the Houston invitational and possibly one other meet before the U.S. Olympic trials at New Orleans in late June.

It is uncertain whether Lewis will compete in the long jump at the summer games in Barcelona. He said he would enter the 100-metre and 200-metre dashes and the long jump at the trials. If he makes the team in all three events, he will compete in the 100 and either the 200 or long jump, plus the 400-metre relay.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY FEBRUARY 21, 1992

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: You feel much too tied down to financial burdens now. It is wise to realize that they confront you every so often to test one's ability to rise above them and look at them objectively.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Study all aspects of whatever material concerns are now yours while you in the evening can be with all persons who are creative that you can benefit from.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Consider the various options you have where putting into motion your personal desires are concerned but wait until evening before implementing them.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You intimate aims seem far from you and don't try to force them just yet but make a plan of action to gain them in a more propitious time.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Avoid those persons today who cause you considerable expense or take up too much of your time so you can't gain time to gain your goals.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Whatever you have in mind of a worldly or public nature should be put on the back burner while you perform chores which just have to be completed.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You have many new ideas you want to put into motion but the

time is not yet right so put them off until you have perfected them more to your liking.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Think about what you can do to get rid of whatever promises you have made in a calm and unperturbed fashion for otherwise you can raise a fuss.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Keep ahead of the game with outside associates by not falling into a trap set to get your agreement to a course of action not acceptable to you.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You want to get far more done on the job than is advisable today so schedule your time more wisely and its not difficult to accomplish.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You have some recreation or entertainment in mind but if it costs more than you can afford look around for more inexpensive amusements.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Matters at your residence need to be handled in a most careful and cooperative manner or some friction of an undesirable nature could develop.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You find that communications to or from you can go astray now so do nothing that can irritate others by anything is not wise to be done at this time.

Experts criticize Krabbe dope test amid witchhunt allegations

BERLIN (R) — Doping experts Wednesday cited possible irregularities in a test that led to the suspension of world sprint champion Katrin Krabbe, amid allegations of a witchhunt against athletes from the former east Germany.

The German Athletics Federation (DLV) stuck by its decision to ban Krabbe and two fellow east Germans until 1996 but Vice President Ilse Bechtold sounded a new note of uncertainty.

"We have regarded our findings as watertight up to now. But who knows what the lawyers will find?" Mr. Bechtold was quoted by the mass-circulation newspaper Bild as saying.

Dutch doping analyst Jac Van Rossum said the DLV's finding that the three star athletes manipulated urine samples in South Africa last month to outwit rules against the use of strength enhancing steroids could be overturned in court.

"Against all regulations, the test results were not individually packed. Manipulation (by outsiders) cannot be ruled out," Mr. Van Rossum, hired by Krabbe sponsor Nike to examine test specimens in a Cologne laboratory, told Bild.

The DLV also violated procedure by failing to obtain a second, independent test or consult the athletes before the South African results surfaced in the news media, Mr. Van Rossum added.

Krabbe, 22, and Grit Breuer, 20 hit Germany's top medal

contenders in the coming Barcelona Olympics, have denied wrongdoing and lodged an appeal with the DLV Legal Commission.

If they lose, they will file lawsuits. Both argue their urine tests were doctored by someone else.

Krabbe's manager Tuesday threatened a six million dollar lawsuit if she lost lucrative sponsors. The first jumped ship hours later when sports nutrition firm Isostar cancelled a two-year promotional deal worth hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Reinhard Rauball, a prominent German sports lawyer hired by the athletes, forecast their reinstatement for the Olympics.

"The chain of evidence of this allegedly manipulated urine sample is so thin we will break through it," said Mr. Rauball.

"The athletes have filed an extraordinary sworn statement denying the charge. It's definite the samples were tampered with, but the DLV has not proven the athletes were involved," he told German television after meeting Krabbe.

Krabbe won gold medals in the 100 and 200 metres at the 1991 World Championships in Tokyo. Breuer took silver in the 400 metres. The other banned athlete, Silke Möller, 27, was the double world sprint titleholder for east Germany in 1987.

Krabbe and Breuer have accused the west German-led DLV of imposing tougher doping controls on them than on west German counterparts in resentment

over the success of athletes moulded in the vaunted but steroid-tainted sports machine of former east Germany, which vanished with German unification in 1990.

Pastor Friedrich Schorlemmer, a former east German dissident, said the athletes had been broken over the DLV's wheel just like many east Germans now being denounced as alleged ex-secret police informers in a witchhunt waged by west Germans. Rev. Schorlemmer said in an interview with the Cologne express:

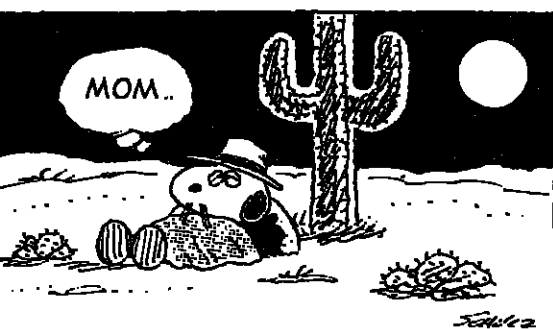
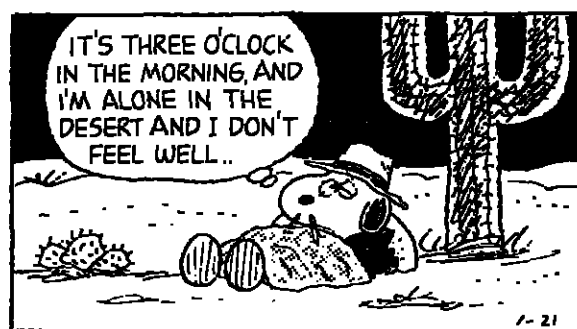
"Is there no doping going on in the west (Germany or abroad)? Are doping offenders in the west just cleverer doping offenders?" Rev. Schorlemmer asked.

The DLV denies preying on east Germans in doping controls. Krabbe's ejection jolted world athletics like nothing since sprinter Ben Johnson's disqualification at the 1988 Seoul Olympics for using muscle-building steroids.

Former DLV President Eberhard Munzert maintained the east German trio should be pardoned for doping, as long as they admitted it and repented, because they grew up in a system where pepping up athletes was routine.

"They were tempted down the wrong track in childhood by trainers, functionaries and doctors because that was what the state wanted in former east Germany," Mr. Munzert said in an interview with the Neue Rhein-Ruhr daily.

Peanuts



Mutt'n'Jeff



Andy Capp



GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNIA HIRSCH
©1991 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

Neither vulnerable. North deals.
NORTH
♠ A 7 4
♥ 6 3
♦ 8 2
♣ A Q J 5 2

WEST
♠ J 9 6 2
♥ 8 5
♦ A 7 5 3
♣ 8 7 4

EAST
♠ K Q J 10 7 2
♥ 6 4
♦ 6 4
♣ K 3

SOUTH
♠ K Q 3
♥ A 9 4
♦ K Q J 10 9
♣ 10 8

The bidding:
North East South West
1 ♠ 1 ♥ 2 ♣ Pass
3 ♠ Pass 3 NT Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Eight of ♠
Defensive signaling is a key aspect of what is surely the most difficult facet of bridge. The thoughtful exchange of information between defenders enables them to construct declarer's hand and decide how best to try to defeat the contract. However, in telling partner what you hold, you also are passing information to declarer. In a game of reasonable standard, how much credence should be placed in a defender's signal?

North-South conducted a sensible auction to the only makeable

game as the cards lay. Had the game been played with transparent cards, declarer would have had no problem coming to nine tricks. What would you do?

West led the suit bid by partner, and declarer held up the ace of hearts until the third round. West discarded the seven of diamonds. With five fast tricks, there were chances of developing the four tricks needed in either minor, as long as West held either the king of clubs or ace of diamonds and declarer picked the suit where East did not have an entry. Would you play a club and finesse, or lead the king of diamonds, and why?

The answer depends on how well you know the player in the West seat. If he is a pillar of society who would never stoop to deception, believe that the seven of diamonds shows the ace and go after that suit. When West wins the ace of diamonds and shifts to a club, don't tempt the fates by taking the club finesse. Shoot up with the ace and cash out your nine tricks.

What if West is the sly sort you usually find hanging around bridge clubs? The nine could be a bluff, or a double bluff—an honest card hoping that you will think it's a bit of duplicity. Mentally toss a coin and go with the result.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY FEBRUARY 20, 1992

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: One of the best days this month as three Grand Moon times offer you a select opportunity to put into motion that course of action that means so much to you. Put aside anxieties.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Be on the lookout for the best means by which to get out from under a financial problem another person which has some uncertain factors connected with it.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You have a clever scheming associate who is trying to get you to do something you instinctively know is not to your best interests.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Consider well how you are going to handle whatever tasks face you or you can get yourself in an unfortunate position that will be hard to get yourself out of.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) A difference in viewpoints between a friend and an attachment can lead to a fixed problem quickly resolved or given up by you.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You reconnect today between outside interests and a desire of you family but they will work out well if you only schedule your time intelligently.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You have some interesting new ideas which you would like to

apply to your usual routine but they are not yet applicable in the realm of your affairs.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You find that a financial arrangement with another person does not work to your complete benefit now so play for time while making new plans.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You will have to relax a little and be less positive you are right in dealing with an associate who has equally fixed ideas as your own.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You have much to do of a regular nature so don't allow some secret anxiety that arises to take you away from your usual activities.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You need now to do what your attachment expects of you or would like you to do instead of going off with some outside acquaintance.

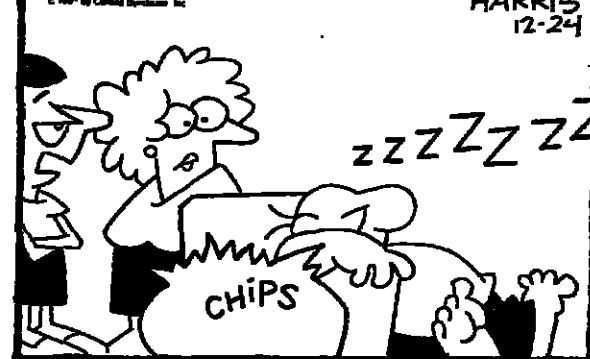
AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Your home should be the main centre of your activities or your thoughts today and even while outside sleep in said promises made at home.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Now you would be wise to stand firm in completing your usual obligations and squelch that desire to go off to some new appealing interests.

THE BETTER HALF.

By Harris

HARRIS 12-24



"Santa never brought me a pony...but Cupid brought me a sloth!"

JUMBLE.

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

ORFID

COTIE

ENSCOD

NUIRJY

Answer: "OF

Yesterday's Jumbles: ELATE PIETY CHROME SUCKLE

Answer: What that self-made man worshipped—HIS "MAKER"

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer tomorrow!

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in co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

Currency	New York Close Date 18/2/1992	Tokyo Close Date 19/2/1992
Sterling Pound	1.7555	1.7531
Deutsche Mark	1.6440	1.6470
Swiss Franc	1.4554	1.4562
French Franc	5.5665	5.6025 **
Japanese Yen	127.94	126.25
European Currency Unit	1.2445	1.2425 **

USD Per STG
European Opening at 8:00 a.m. GMT

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	4.13	4.15	4.25	4.63
Sterling Pound	10.25	10.06	10.00	10.05
Deutsche Mark	9.50	9.50	9.50	9.31
Swiss Franc	7.31	7.31	7.31	7.16
French Franc	9.87	9.87	9.81	9.66
Japanese Yen	5.50	5.16	4.87	4.54
European Currency Unit	10.00	10.12	10.12	9.95

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding 1 U.S. dollar, 1 million or equivalent

Precious Metals	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	352.8	6.80	Silver	4.07	.090

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin
Date: 19/2/1992

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6810	0.6830
Sterling Pound	1.1922	1.1962
Deutsche Mark	0.4130	0.4151
Swiss Franc	0.4571	0.4594
French Franc	0.1215	0.1221
Japanese Yen	0.5306	0.5335
Dutch Guilder	0.3675	0.3693
Swedish Krona	0.1140	0.1146
Italian Lira	0.0551	0.0554
Belgian Franc	0.02029	0.02016

For 100

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7770	1.7860
Lebanese Lira	0.0773	0.0781
Saudi Riyal	0.18135	0.1825
Kuwaiti Dinar	0.1847	0.1856
Qatari Riyal	0.2020	0.2150
Egyptian Pound	1.7430	1.7520
Umani Riyal	0.1847	0.1856
Greek Drachma	0.3585	0.3690
Cypriot Pound	1.4625	1.4640

For 100

CAB Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	17. 2. 1992 Close	18. 2. 1992 Close
All-Share	136.97	138.65
Banking Sector	111.27	110.80
Insurance Sector	136.64	138.06
Industry Sector	160.30	179.87
Services Sector	154.39	154.65

December 31, 1990 = 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

One Sterling	1.7525/35	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.1895/1900	Canadian dollar
	1.6462/72	Deutschmarks
	1.8510/20	Dutch guilders
	1.4878/88	Swiss francs
	33.85/89	Belgian francs
	5.5950/00	French francs
	1235/1236	Italian lire
	128.33/43	Japanese yen
	5.9720/70	Swedish crowns
	6.4475/4525	Norwegian crowns
	6.3760/3810	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	352.50/353.00	U.S. dollars

Egypt, World Bank agree on 25 firms to privatise

CAIRO (R) — The minister in charge of reforming Egypt's vast, inefficient public sector has defended the government against charges of delay and said that a list of 25 companies to privatise has just been agreed on with the World Bank.

After Obeid, minister for cabinet affairs and administrative development, told Reuters in an interview that a series of pilot privatisations had already begun and public assets worth 1.5 million pounds (\$455 million) would be sold by June.

Pilot privatisations were mostly taking place in Egypt's booming tourism business. Two hotels have been auctioned and three will be formed into a single company and floated on the stock market for about one billion pounds (\$300 million).

The state share in three joint venture industrial firms, one involving Kuwaiti partners and another involving Kuwaitis and Germans, will be sold off. Reports on the value of the state shares had been received this week and negotiations could now begin on their sale, Mr. Obeid said.

Land reclaimed by state agricultural projects is also being sold and the projects wound up to gain experience of liquidating public operations.

Mr. Obeid said the pilot series

would be followed by privatisation of a first batch of 25 public sector firms, some wholly state-owned and some joint ventures with the private sector.

He said the list had been agreed with a World Bank mission which left Cairo Sunday and he hoped the companies would be valued and ready for sale by June. They included firms in manufacturing, trade, construction and building materials.

The World Bank urged Egypt last month to speed up its efforts to create a free market economy, including reform of the public sector, while the economy was performing better than expected.

The bank's vice-president for the Middle East and North Africa Koch-Weser, told a Cairo news conference he believed Egypt could have acted faster to identify the initial list of public sector businesses to be sold.

Egypt has agreed its economic reform plans with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), winning agreement in principle from rich countries to forgive \$10 billion of its \$40 billion foreign debt.

Mr. Obeid vigorously defended the pace of the government's reforms in the interview late Monday.

"You cannot throw into the market all your companies, all your portfolio, and say this has to

be sold within the next year or two. This is, as they call it, extreme stupidity."

He said the government had taken time at each stage of reform to involve a wide range of private and public sector businessmen, bankers, and lawyers.

The government had also organised workshops with foreign experts to learn from the experience of privatisation in Britain, France, Italy and Mexico.

"This is the difference between us and eastern Europe. Eastern Europe were not knowledgeable," Mr. Obeid said. "Privatisation is not by slogans. Privatisation is to be done the right way."

He said the government was now trying to raise a fund of \$10 million from donor countries to finance work by consultants to value the first batch of companies for privatisation.

He added that countries only wanted to finance work by their own consultants, rather than contribute to a single fund which Egypt could spend as it wished. But he said he hoped an agreement could be reached this month.

The Egyptian government is expected to name new managers this week to supervise the reform or privatisation of hundreds of companies in the public sector, the director of the Public Enter-

prise Office (PEO) has said.

Businessmen and diplomats say the appointments would show real progress in a crucial area of economic reform delayed by practical problems and resistance from vested interests.

PEO Director Fuad Abdul Wahab said in another interview he expected Prime Minister Atef Sedki to sign a decree this week naming the members of the general assemblies of 27 holding companies being set up to run the public sector.

The PEO is the government body directing public sector reform.

Mr. Abdul Wahab said Mr. Sedki himself, as minister in charge of the public sector, would chair all the general assemblies. Members would include businessmen from public and private sectors, lawyers, bankers, technical experts, and union representatives.

Between them, the holding companies would be responsible for 324 businesses wholly owned by the state and 33 companies in which the state has a majority share, he said.

Each holding company will run a portfolio of businesses and have to decide whether to reorganise, privatise, or close them.

The aim of the restructuring is to give the public sector new managers, many from private

business, and to distance public sector firms from the government.

"The final goal is privatisation but we are not going to do it in one day," Mr. Abdul Wahab said.

The public sector, the legacy of four decades of socialist economics since an army-led revolution in 1952, accounts for more than half of Egypt's gross domestic product.

Businessmen and diplomats say networks of patronage built up over a generation between bureaucracy and the public sector have delayed the government's attempts at reform. The World Bank urged it last month to speed up.

Mr. Abdul Wahab said the PEO would submit a full plan for public sector reform to the prime minister and the bank by March 15.

He said the PEO was drawing up a list of the first batch of public sector firms which it would recommend to the holding companies for privatisation.

Selection criteria were that firms should be as profitable as possible not be over-staffed be small or medium sized and not be "strategic." This was likely to mean businesses in tourism, retailing, agriculture and possibly transport.

A Western economist said the World Bank had pressed the government to list 12 of the most successful public sector companies which could be privatised quickly to inspire confidence in private investors.

Local and foreign businessmen say the biggest obstacle to privatisation is a deeply-rooted suspicion of government dating back to sweeping nationalisation after the 1952 revolution.

Mr. Abdul Wahab said his initial privatisation list would not include any joint ventures, firms in which the state does not have a majority stake.

Several big foreign companies have set up joint ventures in order to operate in Egypt and some are eager to buy out their state-owned partners. The businesses include luxury hotels and manufacture of goods from drugs to ceramic tiles.

Mr. Abdul Wahab said the government had announced it wanted to sell the state's share in joint ventures. But specific proposals would have to be made by the boards of directors and general assemblies of the public sector companies involved.

He said the government had advertised for consultants, local and foreign, to help in evaluating public sector companies and recommending what to do with them.

Islamic bank to set up investment guarantee firm

CAIRO (R) — The Islamic Development Bank (IDB) has decided to set up a firm to guarantee investments and export credits to boost trade among Muslim states, Egyptian Finance Minister Mohammad Al Razaz said Wednesday.

The decision to form the new firm comprising all 44 members of the bank was taken during a meeting of the IDB's board of governors, which opened in Tripoli Tuesday, Mr. Razaz told reporters on his return from the

meeting.

"This institution will play a leading role in encouraging exports and ensuring their movement from one country to another," said Mr. Razaz, who represented Egypt at the meeting.

"It will deepen trade exchanges among member states and encourage investments," he pointed out.

Beneficiaries would include individual private exporters from member states, Mr. Razaz said.

The governors agreed to raise the IDB's capital, he said. Details would be worked out at a meeting in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia in May.

The Saudi English-language Arab News said in January the bank's capital was expected to be raised from \$2 to \$6 billion.

Mr. Razaz said he discussed possible contributions worth \$20 million by the IDB in projects in Egypt. He gave no details.

The IDB has extended finances exceeding \$11 billion since it began operations in 1976.

Half a million more eastern Germans seen losing jobs in '92

BERLIN (R) — Another 500,000 east Germans will join the jobless lines this year as old communist industries shed workers to survive in a market economy, the association for the unemployed said Tuesday.

"We still haven't got through the worst," said Klaus Grehn, president of the East German Association, which lobbies government in the interests of the jobless.

Eastern Germany's unemployment rate rose to 17 per cent in January, 1.34 million workers, from 11.8 per cent in December.

But Mr. Grehn said the official statistics hid the real extent of joblessness because of early retirement, job creation and re-training schemes.

His comments contrasted starkly with forecasts made by the government and its Treuhand privatisation agency, which has said that the eastern labour market is on the path to recovery.

Mr. Grehn said nearly half the east Germans were affected by joblessness or under-employment, a level not seen since the Weimar republic, which later yielded to Nazi dictatorship.

He told a news conference that east German industry would dismiss around 200,000 people this year and another 400,000 would start looking for work after the expiry of retraining and work creation schemes.

High unemployment would disappear only if government, businesses and unions launched a joint campaign to encourage more investment and rescue key east German industries, he added.

Meanwhile, Germany's withdrawal as host to a United Nations conference shows that Bonn is at its financial limits after helping

the former Soviet Bloc, a government spokesman has said. Chancellor Helmut Kohl's spokesman said Bonn had backed off from hosting the 1993 U.N. Human Rights Conference in Berlin after deciding that it could not afford an estimated cost of 100 million marks (nearly \$62 million).

"We also wanted to make clear ... that we have reached a certain upper limit of our financial ability. That applies too to an amount like 100 million marks," spokesman Dieter Vogel said.

"It may be a good thing that the world sees that Germany is not in a position to play along in all financial matters," he added.

"This is a conference that goes beyond our financial possibilities, because of familiar burdens to the German budget," Mr. Vogel told reporters.

Russian sugar processing has virtually stopped

MOSCOW (R) — Virtually all Russia's sugar processing plants have ground to a halt because of a lack of raw sugar, ITAR-TASS news agency has said.

Vasily Severin, head of the Russian agriculture ministry's sugar-processing department, told the agency that shortages of raw sugar had left only four of the country's 95 plants still in operation.

Deliveries of sugar beet were eight million tonnes short last year, Mr. Severin said, which meant the plants only produced four million tonnes of sugar instead of the planned 7.5 million

tonnes.

"The hope now lies with imported raw sugar, which should start arriving at the end of February," he told the agency.

He said Russia had bought supplies from Cuba and France and added that Ukraine had promised to supply two million tonnes of sugar in the second half of the year.

Radio Moscow said that Cuba had begun deliveries of raw sugar in exchange for crude oil. It said Cuba would deliver 500,000 tonnes of sugar, paid for with 200,000 tonnes of crude oil, by the end of April.

The Russian government said last month it planned to sell 1.5 million tonnes of oil, 400,000 tonnes of diesel and 300,000 tonnes of heating oil in January and February to pay for one million tonnes of raw sugar.

Direct-dial calls suspended amid overcharging claims

SYDNEY, Australia (AP) — Telecom Australia said Monday it has halted direct-dial calls to Iraq after an investigation into claims of operator interference and overcharging.

A spokesman for the government-owned monopoly said telecom had notified leading American carriers AT-and-T and MCI after finding operators in Iraq were intercepting direct-dial calls to the country, then including in the bills the time spent locating the second parties.

"It's not just an Australian problem," spokesman Paul Rea said. "It seems to be affecting all others calling to Iraq, too."

Telecom last Friday notified Iraq of the problem and said it would end the direct-dial service until the charging method was changed. The costlier operator-connected services to Iraq remain available.

Iraq has offered no explanation, leaving it unclear whether the charging method stems from problems caused by damage to its telephone system during the Gulf war, monitoring of direct calls or an attempt to generate extra income.

Telecom clients alerted officials to the overcharging after receiving their bills, which detailed the length of international long-distance calls.

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S. Korea urges North to end nuclear pursuit

SEOUL (R) — South Korean President Roh Tae-Woo gave warning Wednesday that relations between the two Koreas could worsen if North Korea failed to stop its suspected pursuit of nuclear arms.

"Once again, I urge North Korea to clear itself of suspicions and misgivings about its development of nuclear weapons by promptly fulfilling its domestic and international obligations under the pertinent treaties and agreements," Mr. Roh said in a nationally televised speech.

"North Korea's failure to take the necessary steps would result in a deterioration of inter-Korean relations and invite strong criticism from the international community," he said.

Mr. Roh's warning came hours after the prime ministers of the two Koreas met in the North Korean capital Pyongyang to proclaim a new era of peaceful co-existence.

Seoul officials suspect the North is stalling on allowing inspection of its nuclear facilities despite the prospect of improved relations with South Korea and economic aid desperately needed by Pyongyang's failing economy.

South Korean Prime Minister Chung Won-Shik and his North Korean counterpart Yon Hyong-Muk exchanged ratifications Wednesday of the non-aggression and non-nuclear pacts agreed in December.

The documents were exchanged across a table in a live televised ceremony — the first ever transmitted between the Koreas.

The exchange put into effect the accords which provide a basis for further reconciliation and the elimination of nuclear arms on the divided peninsula where 1.5 million troops confront each other across the heavily fortified border.

"The North and South which had lived like aliens on both sides of the wall of division confirmed today that they are not aliens but the same nation and one Korea and promised each other to head for reunification together," Mr. Yon said in a speech.

Late on Wednesday afternoon in Pyongyang, two delegates from each side met behind closed doors to discuss the nuclear issue, a South Korean pool report said. Seoul hopes North and South

will agree on the timing and other details of nuclear inspections during the current round of premiers' talks which will end Friday.

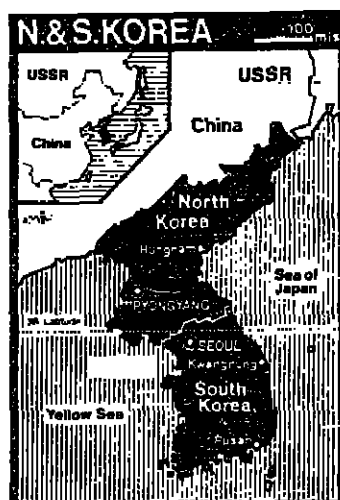
The two Koreas, bitter enemies since the 1950-53 Korean War, reached a six-article draft agreement on New Year's eve, which bans both from testing, producing, receiving, processing, deploying or using nuclear arms on the peninsula.

One article stipulates that a joint North-South Nuclear Control Committee to oversee the implementation of the nuclear accord should be formed within one month after it goes into effect.

The two Koreas are subject to bilateral inspections of suspected nuclear facilities in North and South under the accord.

"The most important issue is the adoption of an agreement to form and operate the joint Nuclear Control Committee," South Korean spokesman Lee Dong-Bok told a news conference in Pyongyang.

The agreement on the committee should be signed before we leave Pyongyang at the latest," Mr. Lee was quoted as saying.



The North last month signed the long-awaited safeguards accord with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) but left it doubtful whether inspectors would gain access to the appropriate installations any time soon.

South Korean reporters in Pyongyang filed a series of gloomy reports saying the North was likely to resort to delaying tactics.

The reporters noted that North Korea has now insisted that the nuclear inspection agreements with the IAEA must be ratified by Pyongyang's rubberstamp Supreme People's Congress which will not meet before early April.

Punjab votes for new state government

AMRITSAR, India (R) — Almost a third of Punjab's voters defied militant intimidation and voted Wednesday to elect a new state government that would end five years of Indian government rule.

"Considering the number of parties boycotting the elections, it's a fair turnout," said deputy chief election officer K.K. Bansal in Chandigarh, the Punjab capital. Previous turnouts had been consistently over 55 per cent.

Voting was moderate in cities and virtually non-existent in the countryside despite the deployment of 500,000 army and paramilitary troops in the rich agricultural state, poll workers and officials said.

Thirty per cent of the 13 million registered voters had cast their ballots an hour before polling closed.

All but one major Sikh party boycotted the polls and militants threatened to cut off the finger, inked to prevent multiple voting, of anyone who voted.

Polling was conducted under the scrutiny of heavily-armed security men and it was a calm day by the standards of Punjab where 20 or more people are often killed each day in the decade-old separatist campaign.

But a bomb planted outside a polling station killed one person and injured nine in the industrial city of Ludhiana and an election official was shot and wounded by militants on a motorcycle at another station.

More than 12,000 people have been killed since Punjab was put under direct rule from Delhi in 1987 — 5,700 last year alone.

In rural villages, where most of Punjab's population of 23 million people lives, polling stations were deserted, except for the dozen paramilitary police assigned to each.

It was clear many more people would have voted but for the threats of militants fighting for an independent Sikh homeland they call Khalistan, or Land of the Pure.

"They made a bloody big mistake," said one middle-aged woman who manages a Gurdwara, or Sikh temple, where she admitted militants often took refuge.

"We are wishing, the whole of Punjab is wishing, for normality," she said in Dharamkhot, near the border with Pakistan.

By midday, nobody had voted in Dharamkhot, a village best known as the home of Santarn Singh, one of the two Sikh bodyguards who assassinated former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1984 and was executed in 1989.

The Sikh revolt in Punjab took a dramatic turn for the worse when Mr. Gandhi sent in tanks to root out armed Sikh extremists in Amritsar's Golden Temple in 1984.

Mr. Reynolds was reluctant to agree just nine years after the last plebiscite gave protection to the rights of the unborn child but bitterly divided Ireland.

A major morality row erupted after the Dublin High Court ruled the schoolgirl could not have an abortion in neighbouring England because the rights of the unborn child had to be considered under a 1983 amendment to the constitution.

The convent-educated girl had been raped by the father of her best friend and has repeatedly threatened suicide since.

Mr. Reynolds, wrestling to contain a major political crisis so soon after taking power, held talks Wednesday with opposition leaders on how to escape from the legal impasse.

Pressure for constitutional change came from the Progressive Democrats, the small party that shores up the government led by Fianna Fail (Soldiers of Destiny).

Energy Minister Bobby Molloy and his junior environment colleague Mary Harney said a new plebiscite was needed to amend the blanket ban on abortion written into the constitution after the 1983 referendum.

"We have to remember that the present situation has arisen as a direct result of the decision made by the Irish people in the last referendum. Another one seems inevitable," Ms. Molloy said.

Opposition parties also called for a new referendum. Workers Party leader Proinsias De Rossa said: "An appalling legal precedent has been created which will haunt every Irish woman and girl."

Up to 4,000 Irish women and girls travel to Britain every year for abortions, often in secret for fear of condemnation at home.



Croatian soldiers clean their weapons near the frontline while remaining on alert despite the ceasefire.

Krajina Serbs postpone referendum on U.N. plan

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia (AP) — Officials from the rebel Serb enclave of Krajina citing alleged harassment by federal troops, Wednesday said they were postponing a referendum on whether to accept the United Nations peace plan for Yugoslavia.

The ballot, originally planned next weekend, ran into vehement opposition from the federal government and the authorities of Serbia, which have already endorsed the peace plan.

A part of Krajina's assembly, meeting under the self-proclaimed republic's leader Milan Babic, Tuesday asked U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali to delay deployment of up to 14,000 peacekeepers until the referendum is held.

Zoran Totic, Krajina's representative in Belgrade, charged federal military police had prevented the Babic government from updating electoral rolls in the region to allow thousands of Serb refugees from other parts of Croatia to vote in the referendum.

Mr. Babic is in a fierce power struggle with Slobodan Milosevic, president of Serbia, and Mile Paspalj, head of Krajina parliament.

A substantial part of the U.N. peacekeeping force to be deployed in Croatia should go to Krajina. Their acceptance by the enclave's authorities is considered crucial for the success of the U.N.'s largest peacekeeping operation since the Congo in 1960-61.

Mr. Babic opposes the peace plan because it would remove Yugoslav army units from Krajina and disarm thousands in the regional militia.

He claims the U.N. needs to give Krajina Serbs, who have been in open rebellion against the government of Croatia, stronger guarantees against attack by nearby Croatian forces.

Although he has said there would be no "organised resistance" to peacekeepers, he has warned of possible incidents if the U.N. troops try to disarm his supporters.

Krajina and another enclave in the eastern part of Croatia broke off from the state after it declared its independence from Yugoslavia last June 25.

Up to 10,000 people are estimated to have died in the bloody civil war which followed. A U.N.-brokered ceasefire has generally held throughout Croatia since it came into force Jan. 3.

Mr. Milosevic and his allies have organised a rival Krajina assembly, which has voted to accept the U.N. plan and oust Mr. Babic.

But Mr. Babic has strong support in Knin, Krajina's capital. Repeated failures to break the deadlock have weakened the authority of Mr. Milosevic, who is accused by some Serbs of abandoning Krajina after encouraging its rebellion against Croatia.

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50 people injured in rampage at pop concert

SEOUL (AP) — More than 50 teenagers were injured, one fatally, in a stampede by hundreds of screaming fans who interrupted a pop concert by the U.S. singing group New Kids On The Block, police said Tuesday.

Hundreds of fans throwing flowers and gifts surged towards the stage 40 minutes into the group's performance Monday night, causing a chaotic stampede in the seclusion crowd of 16,000 at the Olympic Gymnasium Hall. "It was pandemonium," one witness said. "People were screaming and shouting. They couldn't move. Some were trampled." Another witness said about 100 people, mostly teenagers for help as others fell on top of them. Police trying to bring the situation under control clubbed some fans, he said.

Police said Park Jung-Yun, a 17-year-old Seoul high school student, remained unconscious at a hospital Tuesday. KBS Television quoted one doctor as saying her condition was critical and she might not live. Witnesses said panic erupted when about 200 fans in the front rows suddenly stood up and swarmed around the stage. The fans apparently were seeking a better view of the pop idols, who were singing their hit song, Tonight. Hundreds more pushed forward from behind, causing a stampede. Dozens of screaming teenagers fell and were trampled.

SEOUL (R) — Eleven lonely South Korean farmers left for remote Russian-owned Sakhalin Island Tuesday to search for wives on the island better known for coalmines than heart-throbs.

"There have been meetings set up between these men and women in Seoul. But it's very hard to find city women willing to consent to the country," an agricultural cooperative spokesman said. So on chilly Sakhalin, north of the northernmost Japanese home island of Hokkaido, where lives a colony of Koreans stranded since the end of World War II. About 43,000 Koreans were taken as forced labourers to the southern territory of Karafuto, seized from imperial Russia in 1905.

Need an accountant? Look at a live Norwegian billboard

OSLO (R) — Some Norwegians will do everything to beat record jobless queues. One woman perched on scaffolding above a main Oslo street in freezing temperatures Monday to advertise herself as an accountant. "Capable accountant seeks new job," as eight metre long billboard beside her said. "Come up or call."

Some seven metres above the ground sat Aase Ragnhild Vreim, 38, in a sleeping bag and with a mobile phone nearby. A narrow staircase led up to the small platform where she was sitting. "I haven't got any job offers yet," said Vreim, who joins Norway's 120,800 jobless on April 1 unless she finds a new job.

Jagger praises Japan officials despite hold-up

TOKYO (R) — Mick Jagger, veteran of many a verbal tussle with immigration officers worldwide, gave Japanese officials top marks for courtesy Tuesday despite his day stuck in an airport at Narita Airport turned the British rock star away Sunday night, citing a 25-year-old drugs conviction. The Justice Ministry stepped in Monday night to grant him a two-week stay as "an exceptional case." Asked how he felt about the immigration officials, Jagger told a news conference: "I have been in many different immigration rows in my life... They were polite and did their best within the very strict bureaucratic rules. They were very cooperative and I tried to cooperate with them."

The Rolling Stones lead singer, briefly jailed in Britain in 1967 for possessing cannabis, blamed his latest problem on the Japanese embassy in London. Jagger, 48, said he had been to great trouble with the embassy to ensure he had all the right papers following difficulties on his previous two visits, in 1988 and 1990, "because I am such a dangerous person."

"The Japanese embassy in London insisted many, many times that we had the right papers," he said.

Miyazawa endures another parliamentary pounding

TOKYO (R) — Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa, his 14-year-old administration already reeling, endured another parliamentary pounding Wednesday over what is shaping up as Japan's biggest post-war scandal.

Shizuo Wada of the main opposition Socialist Party called on parliament to summon two businessmen to testify about the scandal, which Japanese media suggest may involve political bribery on a massive scale.

Mr. Wada named the two businessmen as Kiyoshi Sagawa, chairman of the Sagawa Kyubin Group, and Seisho Minatogawa, president of its affiliate, Tokyo Sagawa Kyubin.

Mr. Wada's demands came as parliament reconvened after a two-week opposition boycott. The action had threatened to delay passage of the fiscal 1992 budget beyond the April 1 deadline and further weaken the government.

Mr. Wada also demanded that the former Political Secretary of Hiroshi Mitsuoka, leader of one of the five main factions of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), also appear before the house.

Mr. Wada said Sagawa Kyubin was suspected of paying Mr. Mitsuoka and his former secretary, Kenji Ito, a total of eight million yen (\$64,000) in consultancy fees.

Local media say the Sagawa headquarters and its Tokyo affiliate may have paid the monthly salaries of at least 200 political secretaries working for LDP legislators.

If the allegations are correct, these payments, ranging from

200,000 yen (\$1,600) to 300,000 yen (\$2,400) per month per secretary, would violate laws on political funding.

Rumours have circulated for weeks that Sagawa Kyubin, and particularly its aggressive Tokyo affiliate, lavishly wooed top politicians to ensure cooperation as it grew into Japan's number two parcel delivery network in just 10 years.

The first hard evidence of links between Sagawa and the LDP emerged Tuesday following admissions by two influential legislators — Fumio Kyuma, chairman of the lower house Transport Committee, and Keisuke Nakanishi, head of the lower house Steering Committee.

Mr. Kyuma said on television that last May he joined the board of directors of Kyushu Daiichi Unyu Kogyo, a company that handles parcel deliveries for Sagawa in the Kyushu region.

Mr. Nakanishi's office said that Tokyo Sagawa Kyubin bought 30 million yen (\$240,000) worth of tickets for one of his fund-raising parties in 1987 but said that was the extent of links to the trucking group.

Tokyo Sagawa Kyubin is at the centre of an investigation by prosecutors, who last week arrested two of its former executives for arranging dubious loans to smaller companies — some possibly linked to a gangster syndicate.

In return for the loans, the smaller companies gave the executives kickbacks that were then used to create a huge secret slush fund, much of it directed to ruling and opposition party politicians, media reports said.

Collapse of CIS 'would smash Russia's reform'

MOSCOW (Agencies) — The man in charge of saving Russia's economy issued a warning Wednesday that his reforms could be blown sky high if the fragile Commonwealth of 11 former Soviet republics broke up.

"Russia's relations with other members of the CIS worry me today immeasurably more than its relations with the whole of the rest of the world," Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar told the weekly Literaturnaya Gazeta.

He added: "The collapse of the CIS could act as a landslide that would blow up all of our reforms."

Mr. Gaidar's remarks underlined the vital interests at stake for Russia and 10 other former republics which killed off the Soviet Union last December and are struggling to resolve their differences within a new Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

Military and economic tensions, particularly between Russia and Ukraine, have dogged the Commonwealth since birth and threaten its long-term survival into question.

A top aide to Russian President Boris Yeltsin said Tuesday that a break-up of the CIS could lead to a military coup — the latest in a string of warnings that conservatives, ex-Communists or extreme right wingers could make a bid for power.

Popular discontent has grown since Russia, Ukraine and most other CIS states freed prices last month, sending the cost of basic goods soaring by up to 30 times while improving supplies only slightly.

Within Russia, Mr. Gaidar said official corruption was the biggest single threat to his reforms, aimed at building a free market, ending chronic shortages and taming hyperinflation.

There was no doubt the "decency" of the government itself, but lower-level officials were demoralised and too many were out to "make a fast buck while they have the chance."

Russian officials have acknowledged at least some Western food aid to the former Soviet Union is being siphoned off to the black market or falling into the hands of corrupt local authorities. They deny large sums are going missing.

Meanwhile the Commonwealth's military commander predicted Tuesday that the former Soviet Armed Forces gradually will split into separate national armies and expressed hope that the breakup will be "civilised."

In a wide-ranging news conference, Marshal Yevgeny Shaposhnikov also sought to cool a dispute between Russia and Ukraine over control of air force jets based in Ukraine.

He said six pilots who defected to Russia with their SU-24 fighter-bombers last week would be forced to return to Ukraine, but that negotiations would be held on the fate of the planes.

The two most populous and powerful former Soviet republics also have been wrangling for possession of the Black Sea Fleet. Their disagreements have strained the unity of the CIS and contributed to a split at a summit meeting of Commonwealth leaders last week.

Mr. Tsongas, long a favourite of the party's liberal wing, received about three per cent of the vote.

The governor said on Dec. 20 that he wanted to be a candidate but his state's economic problems were so severe he could not run. He did not, however, discourage an organised effort to see him gain attention with a write-in vote.

The campaign unleashed a barrage of last-minute TV ads and banded out tens of thousands of leaflets explaining how to write Mr. Cuomo's name on the ballot. But he finished a poor sixth in the race.

There was one small comfort for Mr. Cuomo.

Fifth per cent of those who voted told pollsters they were unhappy with the declared Democratic candidates and said they thought Mr. Cuomo should run.

Mr. Tsongas, declaring, "America, here we come," is moving swiftly to exploit his victory in New Hampshire's primary with a campaign whirlwind designed to test his blend of pro-business economics and liberal social views.

"New Hampshire, you have done it again," the former Massachusetts senator exulted Tuesday night.

Even before the votes were tallied, the 51-year-old Mr. Tsongas mapped a seven-state sprint over four days — Maine, South Dakota, Maryland, Georgia, South Carolina, New York and Massachusetts — designed to plant his front-runner's flag for the upcoming primaries and replenish his war chest.

The next all-out collision for Mr. Tsongas and Mr. Clinton

shaped up as the Maryland primary on March 3.

Mr. Tsongas reveled in his victory.

Interrupted by a ringing telephone — he quipped: "Answer the phone and tell George Bush he cannot concede till November."

He stressed his anti-establishment candidacy, saying he was offended by the "arrogance" of party leaders talking of enticing a late entry into the race. Democratic congressional leaders have made no secret of their distaste for Mr. Tsongas' views and their concern about his nationwide appeal.

He underscored opposition to the middle-class tax cut that congressional Democrats, Mr. Clinton and others favour. He wanted money to go to tax incentives and investments that will create jobs.

Mr. Tsongas also said he is prepared for a fresh round of questions about his three-year battle with cancer. To do that, he is airing television commercials in upcoming primary states with a New Hampshire-tested ad showing him swimming.

Mr. Tsongas was diagnosed with lymphoma in 1983, and underwent a bone marrow transplant and radiation as part of his treatment. His doctors have given him a clean bill of health for his campaign.

Mr. Clinton minimised Mr. Tsongas' victory, noting that he lives in Massachusetts, just across the border from New Hampshire.

Mr. Tsongas moved to counter that. He said he has already gained in polls in South Dakota and Maryland — which hold primaries over the next two weeks — and said he expected to enjoy the surge in popularity and news coverage that customarily go to New Hampshire's winner.

Bush, rebuffed by New Hampshire, promises to do better

MANCHESTER, New Hampshire (Agencies) — President George Bush was reeling Wednesday from a jolt to his hopes of an easy re-election after New Hampshire rebelled against his economic record and gave right-winger Pat Buchanan a big endorsement.

With 95 per cent of the Republican vote counted after Tuesday's presidential primary, the first of 1992, Mr. Bush won with 58 per cent against 40 per cent for Mr. Buchanan.

But it was a hollow triumph that spelled trouble for months to come as Mr. Bush battles an emboldened and pugnacious challenger whom he branded an "attack dog."

Political analysts said that after the Gulf war victory and the end of the cold war, Mr. Bush should have swept a renomination test with at least an 80 per cent vote.

But hard times that cost 50,000 jobs in three years and loss of homes and business closures in New Hampshire made voters revolt.

They gave a big protest vote to Mr. Buchanan, a columnist who has never held public office and whose only political credentials came from working as a White House aide to three past Republican presidents — Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan.

The White House tried to put the best face on the results, saying the president also heard the message that voters here do not like his laid-back efforts to deal with a severe recession.

"I think the opponents on both sides reaped the harvest of discontent with the pace of New Hampshire's economy," Mr. Bush said in a statement. "I understand the message of dissatisfaction."

He added: "The message is